

FURTHER MILESTONES
IN
GUJARATI LITERATURE



Kunchhadas Gerdhwarthy
1824.

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IN
GUJARATI LITERATURE

BY

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PREFACE

"Milestones in Gujarati Literature" was published in 1914. It treated of Gujarati Literature till the time of Dayaram, which marked the close of the older period. I had promised in the preface of that book another volume on the modern period, and I set to work in the October of 1915, but owing to the very exacting duties of my office, was unable to find time to complete it till the end of May 1921. Thereafter I submitted the Mss. to two of my former helpers, my eldest brother, Motilal, and my friend, Narsinhrao B. Divatia, whose interest in literature is still as unabated as ever. I have greatly profited by their suggestions. The Rev. Mr. Johnson, of the Irish Presbyterian Mission, who was kind enough to revise the former book is no more, but I cannot adequately thank the Rev. Dr. H. R. Scott of the Presbyterian Mission at Surat, for extending to me his help by suggesting valuable changes, offering fresh translations of Gujarati verses, and touching up the text, and all that when he was crippled with sciatica, and doing his work whilst lying on a couch. Even thus he was compelled to leave the revision unfinished, as he had to go home, and the Rev. Mr. George Wilson of Broach was kind enough to go over the remaining part. Both of them have looked upon the work as a labour of love, and in their private letters, have turned the tables on me by writing as if they were being obliged by being entrusted with the revision instead of their obliging me, by sparing for it, their hard-won leisure. I am inexpressibly grateful to them.

PREFACE

A couple of printing presses undertook to do the work but had ultimately to return it and that delayed the publication for some time

The Index has been prepared by my nephew Harmukhlal in a very short time, and I am thankful to him

I have been fortunate in securing a likeness of my grandfather, Ranchhoddas Gurdharbhai, the pioneer of vernacular education in Gujarat. A facsimile of his letter shows how the Education Department worked in the early fifties

BOMBAY, }
June 1924 }

KRISHNALAL M JHAVERI

साकारलक्षणमिति सारं पश्येत् सोऽत्रैव सत्यं ज्ञेयं दृश्यं

तदुभयं सारं पश्येत् नान्यत्तन्मन्त्रेऽपि न विज्ञेयं

यद्वा साक्षात्पश्येत् सारं पश्येत् सारं पश्येत् सारं पश्येत्

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साक्षात्पश्येत् सारं पश्येत् सारं पश्येत् सारं पश्येत्

२३ २३३
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जिसके कंठ में लुप्त हो जाय
धरणी में लुप्त हो

समाप्त

॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥

॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥
 श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥

स्वतन्त्ररीषभेष्टुजायेशने

पिं० दत्त

for lunch

FURTHER MILESTONES

IN

GUJARATI LITERATURE

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

After the transfer of the seat of Government of the East India Company from Surat to Bombay Surat gradually began to decline in importance, while Bombay rose on its ruins. The result of the change was that Bombay took the lead in everything, and it was in that City that the earliest attempts were made to impart education in Gujarati on Western lines. As one would expect, the first care of the servants of the East India Company was to furnish means to educate the children of those of their own faith, and so far back as A.D. 1752 the Court of Directors recommended to the Bombay Government, "the setting up and establishing of charity schools, wherein the children of soldiers, mariners, topasses and others might be educated, as well of the subordinates as of Bombay." The recommendation was carried out, and after passing through some vicissitudes, financial and other, and due to the increasing

number of students, and the quickening of the public conscience on the subject of education, these charity schools, were in A D 1814 with the assistance of Government and the favourable response from the public to the appeal of the Venerable Archdeacon Barnes, established on a firm basis. A Society called ' The Society for promoting the Education of the Poor within the Government of Bombay ' was formed, and while it maintained central schools in Bombay, it also made itself responsible for stimulating education throughout the Presidency. The latter part of its programme it carried out by establishing branch schools at Thana, Surat and Broach and by setting up schools for Indians. By 1820, it had opened four schools for Indians in Bombay. In 1820, it further extended the scope of its activities by publishing books for Indian scholars in Marathi and Gujarati ¹

The system of education which this Society supplanted was of a primitive kind, where students were taught the rudiments of reading, writing and arithmetic. The children learnt the letters of the alphabet and the numerical figures by drawing them on sand strewn on the floor or on a small oblong piece of board. The letters of the alphabet and numbers imprinted deep on a layer of mud spread over a piece of board often served, when dried, as safe guides to the young learners who had to run their pen repeatedly over them to become familiar with the correct form. Thereafter they used powdered white clay mixed with water and brass plates, and then ink and paper. They were expected to rise early, specially in winter, and practise writing, as it was

Old methods
of Education

thought that the cold of the morning and the absence of all disturbance at that hour tended to steady their hand. One result of this was that the older generation of Gujaratis wrote a neat and well shaped hand. Reading books in the sense of modern class books did not exist, and attention in these schools was mostly concentrated on several branches of arithmetic, in which the learners were so trained that sums in the Rule of Three and double Rule of Three were worked out mentally, without the aid of slate or paper. Spelling and reading were not much cultivated and subjects such as History and Geography were never thought of. After acquiring rudiments of this kind of education, at the hands of a school master, concerned more with his remuneration and his cane than teaching, the boys went back to their respective homes, each one to follow the vocation of his family or caste. A Brahmin's son would go to a Pandit and try to learn the Puranas and other holy works, while the more ambitious amongst them would proceed to Benares to set the seal of perfection to their studies. The son of a Bania or Kayastha would either attend the shop of a merchant and pick up the system of native book-keeping, or if the family were so inclined, he might be called upon to study Persian and Arabic with a Mulla or an Akhundji and thus qualify for State service. The other lower castes remained uneducated. In fact, they hardly counted. The only interest in literature of those who were so educated was that they sometimes read the poems of Samal, Premanand and others, copied out by copyists, while those who were uneducated rested content with listening to the street recitations of Vyasas or Man Bhattas narrating various episodes, mostly religious or Puranic. The State did nothing towards education in the present sense of the word and private agency did nothing more than produce Pandits or Mullas.

Contact with Europeans brought about a great change. The Convents and Seminaries so munificently provided by the Portuguese in and around Bombay catered only for the Christian convert, the non-Christian being left to wallow in ignorance

Contact with Europeans
Pioneers
 Imparting of Education on Western lines originated in the mutual desire of the European and the Indian to become acquainted with each others language. It was advantageous to both as it facilitated business between them. In tracing therefore the history of the beginning of education in the province of Gujarat we come across such instances as that of Dr Drummond who having had constantly to travel in the country felt the need of being fully conversant with the local language and having therefore assiduously applied himself to its study was able to publish a grammar of Gujarati (with proverbs) so far back as A D 1804¹. Similarly the Hindus (mostly Parbhus) Parsis and Mahomedans (very few) in and out of Bombay were applying themselves closely to the study of English through whatever means they could secure. In this respect the example of the late Mr Ranchhoddas Girdharbhai (1803-1873) is worth quoting. He was a native of Broach and he came across an invalided soldier Tucker by name who being found unfit for further service was acting as the keeper of the English Church there. From him in A D 1824-25 Ranchhoddas picked up the rudiments of English with great difficulty, as Tucker did not know Gujarati.

As stated above in A D 1820 steps were commenced to be taken for the education of Indians through a Society called the Native School Book and Native School Society afterwards known as

Their difficulties getting over them

¹ Revd Dr Taylor says A.D 1808

the Bombay Education Society. It gave birth in A D 1825 to the Native Education Society which concerned itself with the extension of the scope of its work to Gujarat. With that view it set to itself two tasks one the preparation of suitable school books and the other the preparation of teachers to teach them. In Bombay itself much difficulty was not experienced in securing the latter as there were Parbhus and Parsis who had already been studying on the lines laid down by the Society. But outside Bombay the difficulty was more serious. Lord Bishop Carr of Bombay in one of his visits to Gujarat about this time (1825) happened to come across young Ranchhoddas Girdharbhai at Broach and being struck with his intelligence recommended him to the Society which thereupon readily engaged him. On him therefore devolved the task firstly of finding out from Gujarat men who would fulfil the requirements of the Society by severing all connexion with the old methods of teaching and abjuring belief in old superstitions such as the earth being flat and stationary and secondly of providing suitable books for teaching not only the three Rs but Grammar History Geography and Science. He was successful in this and has ever since been known as the Father of education in Gujarat. He worked under Col Jarvis, the Secretary of the Society who had himself written certain mathematical works which were afterwards translated into Gujarati and Marathi.¹ Though Ranchhoddas prepared certain school books e.g. Isap Nitim Vato—Fables of Æsop at this time the Parbhus of Bombay and the natives of the Deccan being far ahead of the Gujaratis many of the books came from their pen. Neither community laid claims to an accurate knowledge of Gujarati and as translations primarily from Marathi

¹ L. G. इहूनकृत शिक्षामाला (1828) translated by Capt Jarvis and Jagannath Shastri. It comprised Arithmetic and Book keeping.

and subsidiarily from English were in vogue then Gujarati, suffered much at their hands. A most egregious instance of this is that of the Grammar of the Gujarati Language, which is nothing better than a translation by a Deccan gentleman Gangadhar Shastri Fadke (1840) of a Marathi Grammar,¹ लिपिधारा, Lipidhara बोधवचन Bodh Vachan केटलीक डॉडसलीनी वाता, Dodsleys Fables (1850) बाळनिच (Children's Friend), इसाप नीतिनी वाता, Aesop's Fables पंचोपाख्यान (Panchopakhyan) were written in this fashion and they were supplemented by works on Geography History (ब्रिटीश हिंदुस्तानची इतिहास by Ranchhoddas Girdharbhai) and Algebra (बीजगणित). It may be remarked that curiously enough works on higher mathematics furnished a very predominant feature of the works thus come into existence.

A normal class for preparing teachers was opened in Bombay. Preparing teach and Ranchhoddas acted as its head. He had to divide his time between Gujarat and Bombay, as the duty of choosing and inducing suitable men to come to Bombay was cast on him. He was successful

¹ See a specimen of this quoted on p. 18 of Derasari's साठाना साहित्यनु दिग्दर्शन 'भातुना अथ व्यापार तेथी थाय जफळनो सवध करवाने करता जे उपर इउ छ ते कम थयु त' इतीया थायटे.

Compare this with a passage translated from the same language (Marathi) by a Gujarati born and bred

"जे तस्य न्याय सभानी रीत प्रमाण तकरार चलावसो ता तसने खरच घणो थसो अने चुकादा पण उतावळो थस नहा अने तस्ये बेडये म्हाला मित्रो, हु तमारु कल्याण इच्छु छु माटे तम्हने कहु छु क तम्ह बेज मळीने म्हने पचातनामु लखी आपो' इसापनीतिनी वाता नामदार बोड आव एडयुकेसनना हकमथी रणछोडदास गिरधरभाइए मुजरातीमा कथा १८५४ p. 21 Ibid Or another

"विपुवृत्त उपर लवरुप एवा बेड धुव धकी जनारा ज वर्तुला तओने याम्यात्तर अथवा रसावृत्ती एवु नाम छे भूगोलविद्या, प्रथम पुस्तक, बाळ गंगाधर शास्त्राना मराठी परची भाषांतरकर्ता खेमजी हरजीवन जोशी इ स १८४७, p. 20 Ibid.

in his mission and as a result thereof in A.D. 1826 regular schools were opened in Surat (nine), Ahmedabad (two), Broach (two), Kaira (one), Dholka (one), and Nadiad (one), which were staffed with men instructed in Bombay. In A.D. 1832, the work of supervising these schools was entrusted to the Collectors of the Districts, but the experiment was not encouraging, and as in a short time thereafter a Government Department called the Native Board of Education (1840) was created to look after the Education of the province,¹ the work was pushed on vigorously and under its auspices both men and materials began to be prepared quickly and systematically. Sciences, such as Astronomy, Electricity, Chemistry, Mathematics (including Trigonometry, Logarithms, Higher Algebra, Geometry), History and Geography, were more attended to than other subjects, while reading books based on Brougham's and McDougall's series furnished instruction in general subjects. The notable feature of this part of the Board's work was that the text books were almost all of them translations of English works, and instruction in all subjects, Science and Mechanics even, was imparted in the vernacular of the province.²

¹ Its first members were V. K. Bruce, V. R. Morris, John Maclean, Jagannath Shankarsheth, Joseph Glen, Mahomed Ibrahim Makba, Sir Jamshedji Jijibhai and Charles Morte, Secretary. p. 7 *Life of Rao Sahib Mohanlal Ranchoddas* by Chunilal Bapuji Modi.

² This ceased in A.D. 1855 on the appointment of a Director of Public Instruction. Thereafter Science, etc. began to be taught in English. Now after half a century, the cry is again to go back to the vernaculars for the teaching of all scientific and cognate subjects. The attitude of the Court of Directors towards the vernaculars is thus stated in their despatch (No. 49 dated 19th July 1854) "The vernacular languages must be employed to teach the far larger classes who are ignorant of or imperfectly acquainted with English. This can only be done effectually through the instrumentality of masters and professors who may by themselves know English and thus having full access to the latest

In 1854 55 was issued the famous Resolution on Education by the Court of Directors of the East India Company in virtue of which a separate Department called the Department of Public Instruction was created and placed under a special Officer called the Director of Public Instruction¹ Liberal grants of money for the purpose and the direction of sympathetic heads enabled the Department to move with rapid strides In Gujarat under the able initiative and guidance of the late Sir Theodore Hope, a graduated reading series which bore his name (the होप वाचनमाला) was prepared (1857 58) by a committee of those Gujarati scholars² who were engaged in the work of education then, and it did excellent service till superseded by a fresh series fifty years after (1905)

The first fruits of this contact of the West with the East naturally appeared in Bombay Side by side with efforts to impart education in the chief vernaculars of the province i e , Gujarati and Marathi, steps were being taken to teach

Means for
imparting higher
education

improvements in knowledge of every kind impart to their fellow countrymen through the medium of their mother tongue the information which they have thus obtained

¹ The first Director was Mr C J Erskine who belonged to the Civil Service of the East India Company

² The members were (1) Rao Sahab Mahipatram Rupram Nilkanth C I E , (2) Rao Bahadur Mohanlal Ranchhodas Jhaveri (3) Rao Bahadur Bhogilal Pranvallabh (4) Kavi Dulpatram Dahyabhai, C I E , (5) Mayaram Shambhunath (6) Pranlal Mathuradas (7) Mehtaji Durgaram Manchharam Sir T C Hope presided over their deliberations and not a single sentence was finally approved, until it had been carefully scrutinised by him

English also to those who were so inclined. The Elphinstone Institution founded (in 1827) to commemorate the name of one of the ablest British statesmen the Hon ble Mountstuart Elphinstone, which later (in 1856) bifurcated into the Elphinstone High School and the Elphinstone College supplied the means for giving what would now be called secondary or higher education¹ as distinguished from the primary or vernacular branch of it. In Poona (1837) and Ahmedabad (1856) similar Colleges were founded. The vernacular schools, district and local, acted as feeders to the Elphinstone Institution to which a stream of scholars steadily came to turn back again after full instruction to water and develop the seed already sown by pioneers like Ranchhoddas Girdharbhai. It was to this Institution that men like Rao Bahadur Mohanlal Ranchhoddas Jhaveri (1828-1896) and Rao Saheb Mahipatram Rupram (1829-1891), to mention only a few of those who early laboured in the cause of education in Gujarat, came and having studied for a time, went back in obedience to the wishes of their superiors taking with them the torch of knowledge to Gujarat. It was at this Institution that men like Dadabhai Naoroji, Naoroji Fardunji, Ardeshir Framji Moos, Nanabhai Rustomji Ranina and a score of other Parsi celebrities drank deep of the fountain of

¹ The Elphinstone Institution had its origin in a meeting of the Bombay Native Education Society on the 22nd of August 1827 to consider the most appropriate method of testifying the affectionate and respectful sentiments of the inhabitants of Bombay to the Hon ble Mountstuart Elphinstone on his resignation of the Government of Bombay. The result of the meeting was that a sum of money amounting to Rs 2 29 656 was collected by public subscription towards the endowment of professors, etc for teaching the English language and the Arts Sciences and Literature of Europe. The Bombay University Calendar (1902-03)

European Arts and Literature, and it was here also that other Hindu youths of Bombay like Gangadas Kishordas and Karondas Mulji who have left their mark on the early literary life of Bombay, studied. In 1857 the University of Bombay was founded and thenceforward the cause of higher education—with which that of the literature of a country is always bound up—has continued progressing.

The output of books during this period of nearly forty years (1820-57) will give some idea of the beginnings of Gujarati literature on modern lines. Translations of works on Ethics (नीति) have already been hunted at Biography such as the life of Columbus by Pranlal Mathuradas and Chantra Nirupana (Selected Lives) by Mahipatram Rupram and Nanabhai Haridas (1854), History, such as मिस्र लोकोનો इतिहास, मीडोस અને इरानी लोकोનો इतिहास History of the Egyptians, History of the Medes and the Persians by Ranchhoddas Girdharbhai, History of the Marathas from the Marathi of Captain Cohen (मराठानीबखर) by Mohanlal Ranchhoddas, Grammar, Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, Books on Science, like the Mechanics of Nasarwanji Chandabhai, the publication of monthlies like the journals of the Jnan Prasarak Mandali¹ and the Buddha Vardhak Sabha containing articles on various subjects, educational, scientific, social, testify to the stir made in the minds of the *alumni* of the different institutions then working with one sole object. In short the first touch of this education broadened the vision of the young men of the times and their outlook on life assumed a new character altogether.

¹ It was called the 'गनेआन परसरक—एटले ज एलम तथा होनरोने केलावे करनार—चोपानीड.' It was first published in 1849.

which was reflected in their books and the way in which they shaped their lives, which were wholly given up to raising the ideal in life of their brothers and sisters Dadabhai Naoroji, to mention one out of many, furnishes a concrete instance of the fact

In due course the waves of this new stir in life reached the districts, and although for long Bombay justified her claims to being the fountain head from where the stream of reform started Surat and Ahmedabad came very near her in sharing the honours of the struggle of the old with the new

As batch after batch of the new teachers went out from Bombay they made their presence felt in the mofussil. A notable example of this is Mehtaji Durgaram Manchharam (1809-1878) whose intrepidity, courage of conviction and intelligent anticipation of coming reforms (social) have made his name a household word in Surat. After completing his education in Bombay he came back to his native place (in 1826) and till the date of his death strove to raise the moral tone of Surat. In conjunction with the then Head Master of the Surat English School (opened in 1842) he founded a band of Reformers¹ who boldly and nobly attempted to dispel the ignorance and superstition of their fellow citizens of Surat.²

¹ There were five prominent members of his band Durgaram Dadoba Dinman Shankar Dalpatram and Damodardas. They were called the band of five D's पाँच दहानी दोस्त.

² English dedication to the Life of Mehtaji Durgaram Manchharam by Mahipatram Rupram

The Mehtaji belonged to the most orthodox and conservative but at the same time most accomplished Durgaram Mehtaji and intelligent community of the province, viz the Nagar Brahmin. Blessed with a remarkable intellect he very soon reasoned himself out of the several superstitious beliefs and caste usages then prevalent, such as the existence of ghosts (गुप्त) and their exorcism by means of incantations (मन्त्र) the evils of early marriages and the bar against remarriage of high caste Hindu widows. In addition to awakening the public mind by means of speeches he founded (on 22nd June 1844) a Sabha called the Manav Dharma Sabha, at whose sessions at regular intervals problems of social, caste and domestic reforms were debated. His bold views and their outspoken exposition placed him in imminent danger of death at times at the hands of ignorant and unscrupulous people. In 1842 he obtained a lithograph press from Bombay, with which under the auspices of a Society called the Pustak Prasarak Mandal (पुस्तक प्रसारक मंडळी) he wished to disseminate knowledge by means of printed books. This press was the first of its kind in Gujarat,¹ though I find in a list of Printing Presses in Gujarat published in सादरीनु साहिरय (p 300) that the Mission Press of Surat was founded in 1817. Besides writing a diary and the minutes of the Manav Dharma Sabha the Mehtaji led the way in the production of works

¹ Sir Charles Metcalfe the Governor General of India had about this time (1835) passed an Act extending the liberty of the Press, but the District Magistrate of Surat would not allow the Mehtaji to set up the printing press in the city as he was of opinion that thereby a door would be opened for Government officers to be publicly criticised so it had to be worked outside the city limits. It was the same officer who on being requested by the Head Master of the English school to examine his students in Geography and Grammar contemptuously exclaimed 'What? Geography and Grammar to the Blacks?'

on Science by a book on that subject (विज्ञान-पुस्तक) ¹ His crusade against जादू (Magic) and his fight against the pernicious usages of Hindu Society won him many followers most remarkable of whom was Mahapatram Rupram who when his turn came stood up equally fearlessly in support of advanced views

Ahmedabad the capital of Gujarat began to buzz with even greater literary activity during this period Ahmedabad till A D 1818 knew very little rest as it was open till then to attacks from two powerful Governments the Gaikwads and the Peshwas But after this year it settled down to a peaceful existence and its first Mehtaji (teacher) Tuljaram Sukhrām who came down from Bombay equipped with the new system of education in 1826 was so very successful that the school where he first taught is still known by his name Rao Saheb Bhogilal Pranvallabh, Rao Bahadur Bholanath Sarabhai Khan Bahadur Edalji Dosabhai are some of those who are now no more but who having been educated under the new system wrote on various subjects, and assisted in making Ahmedabad at that time a centre of literary activity But the event which eclipsed all such individual efforts was the foundation in 1848 of the Gujarat Vernacular Society through the exertions of the Hon'ble Mr A K Forbes ² He was one of those Englishmen who by their overflowing sympathy with the people amongst

¹ साठीना साहित्यनुं 1दगूदर्शन p 12

² He died at Poona (1821—1865)

whom their lot is temporarily cast have left an abiding name in history. Appointed in 1842 to the Civil Service of the East India Company, he landed in Bombay in 1843. He served in different districts for a short time and then came to Ahmedabad as an Assistant Judge in 1846. Immediately after, he began to study Gujarati with Bhogilal, and in 1848 through Bholanath, was able to call the poet Dalpatram to his side. Thus began a literary friendship between an Englishman and an Indian, which the pen of the Indian Poet has immortalised. To the advancement of early modern Gujarati Literature a giant's share was contributed by him (Forbes).¹ He

His services to Literature had a taste for archæology and ancient monuments and manuscripts. The old archæological and historical remains of Gujarat intensely interested him, and he wrote a book called the *Ras Mala* in English, which throws a flood of light on the Chronicles of old and mediæval Gujarat. In founding the Gujarat Vernacular Society of which he became the first Honorary Secretary, his immediate object was the collection of old Gujarati manuscripts with a view to their preservation, taking steps to translate into Gujarati books from English and other languages and also the production of original works by giving a suitable remuneration to writers, and thus enrich the language and literature of the province. He felt very keenly the poverty

¹ Later, when he was transferred to Surat, he followed the same benevolent policy and founded a society called the સુરત અઠાવોસી "Surat Athavasi" Society, and got it to publish a journal called the "Surat Samachar." When he came to Bombay as a Judge of the High Court (then called the Sadar Adalat), his name was perpetuated by the foundation of a Society called the Forbes Gujarati Sabha, which with a capital of about a lac of Rupees has also been striving for the encouragement of Gujarati Literature.

of both. The vocabulary was poor and good books were few. He desired to improve the language which as spoken by the people then was in his opinion merely vulgar (વજાહ). The motto of the Society and of himself, he said, should be development of Gujarati Literature. The foundation of the Society was only one of the many means to that end. He wanted the old poetry of Gujarat not to perish. He collected a number of manuscripts at great cost,¹ while in 1852 he gathered together a number of Gujarati bards and poets at Idar, somewhat on the lines of those old princes who delighted in calling together such men and indulging in a literary contest, one poet vying with another in the composition and recitation of impromptu verses. He distributed rewards amongst all. This resuscitation of an old time usage has been commemorated by his able lieutenant, Kavi Dalpatram, in a long poem called the Forbes Vilas.² He also founded a library (1844), boys' schools and girls' schools (1850), and was instrumental in getting a Printing Press (1851) of its own for the Society, and contributed largely to a weekly issued from it. The *Buddhi Prakash* now in its 71st year, the monthly organ of the Gujarat Vernacular Society was published first in 1854. The *Buddhi Prakash* in the beginning was published fortnightly by the *Buddhi Prakash Mandal*. It was first published on 15th May 1850. Latterly it began to be published every month. It was lithographed at first but was put into type in 1864.

¹ It is said that in procuring one of them viz., that of *Prithuraj Rasa*, he spent nearly Rs. 150 in postage alone.

² It is said that Dalpatram wielded such an influence over Forbes that being himself a Hindu, he had persuaded the Englishman to give up animal food.

Ranchhodbhai Udayram who unhappily died only a few years (1923) the late Mansukhrām Suryaram, and other work took a leading part in founding the For Gujarati Sabha in Bombay the late K Chhotalal Sevakram and the late Maganlal Valhatch also contributed largely to the literary activity of the period. They were in the hey-day of their youth, and they enriched Gujarati literature with books on various subjects, all of them teeming with fresh, original ideas and Gujarati readers owe them their introduction to some of the classical works in English in the shape of translations ¹

The very first student of philology in Gujarat, to whom great credit should be given for the spade work Shastri Vrajlal he did in this direction Shastri Vrajlal Kalu lived at this time. Although he was no product of the times and although he did not know English instinctively turned towards the right direction in his study of language, and his two books, the *उत्सर्गमाळा*, Principles of Practical Etymology and the History of the Gujarati Language, *गुजराती भाषाનો इतिहास*, stand as land marks in that branch of subject

¹ For instance the *Shakespeare Katha Samaj* jointly translated by Ranchhodbhai and Chhotalal

The following extract from 'the Report of Public Instruction for the Bombay Presidency, 1861-1862' would be found interesting in connexion —

"Translations of European classics executed by writers of known abilities should if not evidently inappropriate be freely published and rewarded by Government, partly, because the art of translating English deserves particular encouragement and partly, because if vernaculars are destined to become literary languages these vernacular classical books will probably be valuable as a basis for further work."

Out of the many Englishmen who have laid Gujarati Literature under obligation the name of the Rev Joseph Van Someren Taylor stands foremost and his Grammar. He loved the language, he loved its literature and he studied both with the eye of a cultured and critical student ¹ As a result of his study his Grammar ² (1867) of the Gujarati Language (both large and small) and his ધાતુકોષ stand as monuments of literary research

¹ He expresses his love thus —

સામઘ્યાદિક ગુજરાતી કવિઓના પ્રથમા જુવો, તુકે તુકે આયાસના પ્રમાણ દેખાય છે મનોયત્ન કર્યા પૂર્વે ગુજરાતી કાચી દેખાય પણ પછી સ્તરી પાકી જળાશે યત્નકારી અધુરો તો તેની ભાષા પણ અધુરી, પણ જો વાપરનારના યત્ન સર્પૂર્ણ, તો ગુજરાતી પણ સર્પૂર્ણ, હા, સળગારેલી પણ દેખાય ગુજરાતી,—આર્યકુલની,—સંસ્કૃતની પુત્રી,—ઘણી ઉત્કૃષ્ટ ભાષાઓની સગા ! તેને કોણ કદિ અધમ કહે ?

પ્રભુ એને આશિર્વાદ દેજો જુગના અત્ત લગી એની ઘાળીમા સદ્વિદ્યા, સદ્-જ્ઞાન, સદ્દર્મનો સુબોધ હોજો, અને પ્રભુ વર્તા, જાતા, શોધક—એનું વચાણ સદા સુનાવતો Epilogue to Taylor's Gujarati Grammar (Third Ed 1893)

It means Study the poems of Samal and others and you will discover in every line evidence of mental toil Gujarati may seem at first and in the absence of deep study an imperfect language but the more it is studied the more its perfections are revealed If one gives it merely a superficial examination it seems to be of limited capacity but a deeper study shows it to be a language, rich in power of expression and of ornament. Gujarati a member of the great Aryan family a daughter of Sanskrit sister of many famous tongues who can call her inferior ?

God bless her Till the end of time may she enshrine true knowledge true philosophy the sublime teaching of true religion May she ever sound forth the praise of the Lord who is our Creator Redeemer and Sanctifier !”

² This is the first Grammar written in Gujarati on the lines of English Grammars

Bombay took the lead, of course, and although the ranks of the workers there were being continually depleted by some of them going away into the districts it was never found difficult to fill up the gaps as fresh members kept pouring in. The energies of the young men of those days—and there was a host of them—Parsis, Gujaratis, Parbhus, with a faint sprinkling of Mahomedans—in order to work with greater concentration and force, became focussed in a Society called the Students' Society, fostered by the Professors of the Elphinstone Institution, specially Prof Reid who had taught his pupils, that their duty after getting themselves educated was the education of the uneducated, and the improvement of their society. The Students' Society was only a fore runner of several others. The Gujarati Jnan Prasarak Mandal, though a branch of it, was so powerful as to be considered an independent body and it had by means of its organ called the *गनभान परसारक*, a monthly founded in 1849 and chiefly helped by Prof Dadabhai Naoroji and other Parsi gentlemen tended to enlighten people in various scientific and non-scientific subjects. So great however was the enthusiasm of the young workers, that they found this Society and its monthly periodical insufficient to meet their needs, and the Hindu section of it founded a third Society and called it the *Buddhi Vardhak Sabha* (1851). Its monthly was called the *Buddhi Vardhak*. Ranchhoddas Girdharbhai was its President for a time and his son Mohanlal, its Secretary. The contributions made to it by the several members epitomise the work of the youth of the period. The new life that was stirring in them materialised in their practical work. The education of women for instance was one of their platforms and young men like Mohanlal Ranchhoddas, Gangadas Kishordas, Karsandas Mulji, Mahipatram Rupram amongst Hindus, and Dadabhai Naoroji,

Sorabji Shapurji Bengali, Ardeshir Framji Moos and Nanabhai Rustomji Ranana amongst Parsis, by means of speeches, writings and by opening schools,¹ where some of them taught voluntarily and without any remuneration, while studying or serving at other places, gave a practical demonstration of the faith that was in them. They succeeded ultimately. The prejudice against the education of women was removed and as the fruits of their labour, we now see Gujarat dotted with girls' schools. Popularisation of Science was another platform of theirs, and the જ્ઞાનપ્રસારક મંડળી, which every year holds a series of public lectures on scientific and cognate subjects in Bombay is another living monument of their energy. Prejudice against travel to foreign countries was attacked by some of them though their efforts did not meet with much success.

A present day² writer has called the enthusiasm of this period unusual, and has compared it with the restless efforts of a child which has just begun to walk. The more it falls, the more energy it puts forth to walk. Those who had drunk of the new wine wanted others to taste it, and their efforts were characterised by unselfish activity. In Surat they materialised in the માનવધર્મ સભા, in Ahmedabad in the Gujarat Vernacular Society, in Bombay in the Students' Society (later called the Students Literary and Scientific Society), the જ્ઞાનપ્રસારક મંડળી—where Parsis and Hindus worked hand in hand and the રુદ્ધિવર્ધક સભા.

The movement which led to the revival of Gujarati literature in the middle of the Nineteenth Century owed its origin as we have seen to English influences.

¹ For instance, the Students' Scientific and Literary Society's Girls' School, which is still in existence.

² See *સાદીનું સાહિત્ય*, p. 44.

Kathuawad came into line much later, it is true, but the first school was opened in distant Gogo by Ranchhodas Girdharbhai, who followed it up with schools at Chuda and Ranpur. Thereafter education began to spread through the efforts of one or other of the Bombay educated youths. Rao Bahadur Prantal Mathuradas was the first to go to Junagadh and after him Bhogilal Pranvallabh, and many years later Rao Bahadur Gopalji Surbhai followed, and modelled the Educational Department of Kathuawad on a progressive basis.

CHAPTER II

POETRY

Till the middle of the Nineteenth Century and for some time after, the stream of poetry continued to flow in its old channels. Religious topics and Puranic mythology were its leading features. Narrative verses like those of Samal had found few imitators. Dayaram, while mainly adhering to the religious side of it, had launched out into a new direction altogether, and his *garbis*¹ on the loves of Radha and Krishna, took one back to the days of Narsinha Metha and Miranbai, though they were far sweeter, more graceful, and easier to follow than those of his distinguished predecessors. Dayaram was inimitable, but Premanand and Samal, specially the latter, found a number of imitators. Samal's play on words, his method of propounding riddles or questions and answers in verse, his *Ohkhas* were copied, and till poetry modelled on that of Wordsworth, Shelley and Tennyson, was introduced, such imitations held the field.

Dalpatram (1820-1898) and Narmadashankar (1833-1886) are considered the leaders of early modern Gujarati Literature. They were both animated by one and the same desire, viz., social reform. The crusade against social evils such as prohibition of travel to foreign countries, child marriages, prejudice against the education of girls, ban on widow remarriage,

¹ Songs, lyrics.

absorbed the energies of all educated men whether they wrote poetry or prose whether they preached from platforms or worked in private thus one problem alone engaged them Dalpatram and Narmadashankar, however approached the matter from different view points and consequently their methods of work differed Dalpatram was educated on old lines he had studied Vraj and Sanskrit Poetry and kindred subjects in the Poshal (native College) at Bhuj in Cutch while Narmadashankar was educated in the new Government schools and knew English He therefore naturally fell in with those who worked on the new lines, while Dalpatram preferred to stick to the old ones As regards reform Dalpatram preached a slow and steady progress, while Narmadashankar stood for a sudden swift onslaught¹ Thus one was the antithesis of the other and both having powerful pens their admirers naturally divided into opposite camps. Feelings ran high and personal recriminations resulted

¹ Dalpatram's method in his own words was —

सज्जन समझावजो रे, धीरे धीरे सुधारानो सार,
लाखो कीचीपर लाडवो, आखो मेलीये तो मरी जाय,
भुको करी भभरावीये, तो ते खासी रीतेथी खाय,—सज्जन०

वेनचरित्र, दलपतकाव्य, भाग २ जो, पृ० २१६.

Good men preach the benefits of reform by slow degrees For instance if you put (dump down) an entire sweetmeat ball on a swarm of ants they are sure to be crushed but if it is broken up and strewn before them in powder form they would eat and enjoy it

Narmadashankar's advice was —

या होम करौने पडो, फतेह छे आगे,

* Charge headlong and victory is sure

Dalpatram, a Shrimali Brahmin by caste, came from Wadhavan, and, as stated before, studied the two cultured languages of the time, Vraj and Sanskrit, with the sciences of Poetry and Figures of Speech¹ with a learned Jain Sadhu in a College at Bhuj. Although he was serving the Government as a Daftardar (Native Assistant) to the Political Agent at Sadra, his mind naturally inclined towards Poetry, and when in 1848, he was called by Mr. Forbes to Ahmedabad to assist him in his studies as well as his scheme for the encouragement of Gujarati letters, a most congenial field of work was opened out to him, in which he laboured till the last, earning rewards from Government,² Native Princes,³ and Shethias, and praises from the public. Forbes was transferred to Surat in 1850, where he remained for a year, and then returned to Ahmedabad for a time, going to England in 1854. Forbes's place as Secretary was taken by Seeward and thereafter by Curtis. The Gujarat Vernacular Society, although it had been in existence for seven years, had not flourished and Curtis was of opinion that only Dalpatram could make it a success. He, therefore, suggested to Forbes that he should induce him to give up his post as a Government servant and join the Society as an Assistant Secretary. Forbes wrote to Dalpatram and in deference to his wishes Dalpatram gave up Government service and entered that of the Society in June 1855. His choice was amply justified. In accordance with the plan laid down by Curtis, he went about from place to place and from person to

¹ काव्य, रस ने अलंकार शास्त्र.

² He was created a C. I. E., in 1885.

³ Several Native States and rich men gave him annual pensions and money presents, aggregating Rs. 550 and 6,130 respectively. A memorial fund of Rs. 12,000 was also raised for him and a portrait placed in the Hemabhai Institute at Ahmedabad.

person and the result of his persuasive efforts always conveyed in verse was that the Society secured a permanent habitation and large sums of money¹ Curtis went home in 1869, and was succeeded by Scott, when he went to Sind, in 1872, Rao Bahadur Gopal Hari Deshmukh became the Secretary and when he retired in 1876-77, Rao Sahib Mahapatram took his place Dalpatram served the Society till 1878 and till then most successfully and uninterruptedly edited the *Buddhi Prakash*² An affection of the eyes³ and increasing physical weakness made him leave the Society's service which he had accepted at some pecuniary sacrifice, in 1878, when the Society voted him a monthly pension for life of Rs 20 and of Rs 4 each to his two wives, not a magnificent sum certainly, but perhaps the Rules and the state of its funds would not allow more His active mind in spite of physical disabilities, would not remain quiescent in retirement, and between 1880 and 1898 when he died, the product of his pen would fill quite a respectable volume

His verses alone fill two large volumes aggregating nearly 650 pages Besides this he has written plays, and as editor of the *Buddhi Prakash* for a quarter of a century, much prose A mere list of the prize essays he wrote in verse would shew the variety of subjects over which his pen ranged, and prove his deep

¹ He successfully approached Nagarsheth Hemabhai of Ahmedabad 1855 H H Vijaysinhji of Bhavnagar 1859 Sheth Sorabji Jamsheedji Jeejeebhai 1864 Sheth Premchand Raychand of Bombay, 1865 H H Prigmalji Rao of Cutch 1870 Before H H Khancerao Maharaj whom he approached in 1863 could do anything he died

² Except for five months in 1857 when on account of the Mutiny all papers and periodicals were stopped

³ It later developed into total blindness and hence it led some people to call him the Milton of Gujarat

conviction that to regenerate the province all old superstitions and evil social usages must be removed. It has to be admitted to his great credit that although he was brought up in orthodox surroundings that although he was educated on the old lines and did not know English still coming in contact with Englishmen of the type of Forbes and Curtis and by a natural gift for clear thinking he was able to rise above the prejudices and conservatism of his time and unlike his contemporary Narmada-shankar, who in later life recanted his early beliefs, keep up his convictions till the end. In eradicating deepseated evils over throwing scandalous usages and improving the morals of society he had done yeoman's service.¹

His works as enumerated by him are 1 An Essay on Ghosts (1849) 2 An Essay on Caste (1851) 3 Lakshmi Natal [a drama] (1851) 4 Seven Hundred verses called the *अथनसप्तशती* (1851) 5 On the death of Maharaja Vijaysinhji of Bhavnagar (1852) 6 On Widow remarriage (1853) 7 Dialogues between women (1853) 8 An Essay on [the evil of] early marriage (1854) 9 On the duties of a pupil and his Guru (preceptor) (1857) 10 On the improvement of towns (1858) 11 Vijaya Kshami on the toleration of H. H. Vijayasinhji of Bhavnagar (1859) 12 13 Kavya Dohan [selections from old Gujarati poetry] Parts I and II (1860-1863) 14 Verses on the ruinous Share Mania of 1865 (1865) 15 Hans Kavya Shatruk Verses on various subjects dedicated to Sheth Hansraj Karamsey of Bombay (1865) 16 On the state of the Hindus in Gujarat (1867) 17 On the statesmanship of H. H. Jaswantsinhji of Bhavnagar, 18 On improving the prospects of Saurashtra [Kathiawad] (1868)

¹ साठीना साहित्य दिग्दर्शन 11 34 and 137

19 Venachantra a poem in aid of the cause of remarriage of widows (1868), 20 Shraavan Akhyani in Hindi, (1868), 21. On Social Duties (1869), 22 Mithyabhimān Nataka—a play one of his best works (1870), 23 Daivajna Darpan, (1873), 24 Kavya Sankshepa—abridged poems (1875); 25 On the question of marriage within and without one's Gotra (1875) Besides these he wrote the Forbes Vilas and the Forbes Virah The several poems that he contributed towards the Hope school book series, 1857-58, have helped to keep his memory green with those who have studied in primary schools from 1858 onwards His initials (क ड ड) K D D with which each piece of poetry was marked had become as familiar as his class book to every school boy He has written a number of *garbis*,¹—verses intended specially for girls and women—and wedding songs He has written a great number of complimentary poems² His allegory on the disappearance of Indian crafts and industries under the onslaught of China, England, and other foreign countries—called the Invasion of King Industry (इन्द्रखाननी चढ़ाई) with the assistance of his minister Machinery (यन्त्रखान), his commander in chief piecegoods (मादरपाट) and his army consisting of the several articles imported into India,—caused some ferment when it was published in 1851

Three things predominate in his verse writings, (1) advocacy of a slow but steady reform of social evils, (2) love of liberty, with a horror for oppression, and (3) patriotism The first would be obvious from the titles of his several	Predominant features of his verses
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¹ His कच्छगरबावली (1850) and मागलीक गीतावली (1881) brought him Rs 500 and 400 respectively from the Rani of Cutch and the Thakore of Wadhavan

² Vol II of the Dulpat Kavya Chap VII

works quoted above, the second is exemplified by a whole chapter¹ written to expose the oppression and extortion due to the *Begar* (forced labour) system, under which Civil and Military officers of Government impressed the services of poor villagers, and extorted conveyances, foodstuffs and other articles without paying for them. His description of it—in prose and verse—is very touching, and the wails of the oppressed village Bhangi or the helpless cartman, under the lash of the underling appeal to all. Dalpatram says that all this has now in a great part disappeared under the British Government, but he complains of another evil brought in its train, viz.,—the prolonged and costly litigation in Courts of Justice, the result of Acts and Codes which few understand.² Another part of his collected writings called Love for One's Country (સ્વદેશવાસ્તવ્ય) illustrates the third point.³

¹ અપેજા રાજ્યપ્રકરણ (1855), see p 18, Vol II of the Dalpat Kavya.

² આ શાળી સરકારનો, નિર્મલ છે શુભ ન્યાય,
પણ બોલ્યા વિણ કોઈનાં બોર નહિ વેચાય,
માગે તેને તો મઠે અદલ હલો ઇન્સાફ,
મ અતરજામી નથી, કેમ કરે દરયાફ;

દલપતકાવ્ય, p 18 Vol. II.

With a political foresight rare at the time, Dalpatram preached that under British administration, if you want any rights, you must demand and demand them persistently. The justice meted out by this wise Government is pure, but unless you shout out, your wares won't sell. Impartial justice is given to him who demands it. Government is not omniscient, how can it judge unless apprised of the wrong?

³ See pp. 22 to 71 of Vol II of the દલપતકાવ્ય and p 24 *passim*.

સ્વદેશનું સર્વ પ્રકાર સારું,
તમે કરો તે ગણિને તમારું,
જરૂર યમા જન ધર્મ જાણો,
એ સ્વદેશી, અભિમાન આણો.

Those accustomed to judge poetry from modern standards, will hardly vote Dalpatram a high place
 Slender poetic merit His verses on such subjects as Bugs,¹ Tobacco² a cobbler's stone³ addiction to drink Hashish⁴ &c would be considered by them as merely a rhyming arrangement of words devoid of any good poetic merit Perhaps his verses called the ऋतुवर्णन, description of the six seasons in which the Indian year is divided, with the description of Sunrise and Sunset thrown in would be considered a very inferior type of work where poetry reads like prose⁵ the mere cataloguing of the changes of the season and their well known effects on animate and inanimate nature would appear to them to be a travesty of poetry While in some instances they might admit the existence of poetic merit in him though extremely slender and following the beaten track of old poets lacking any novelty or originality which would arrest the attention of the reader⁶

Beneath your country in every way Consider its interest your own
 Know that your duty as a member of society lies that way O my
 countrymen be proud of your country

1 FP 41 215 of the Dalpat Kavya Vol I

2 P 14 of Ibid Vol I

3 P 243 of the Dalpat Kavya Vol I

4 P 53 of Ibid Vol II

5 P 22 of Ibid Vol I

6 (a) In describing Sunrise he says (p 74 Vol I of the Dalpat Kavya)

प्रार्थी दिशामा नम रक्त दिशे,
 ए ठाम शोभा उपची अर्तीशे,
 जाणे प्रतापी परणे मूषाळ,
 आनंदनो आज वडे गुलाब

In the east the sky appears red great beauty is seen there It is as if a powerful monarch were being married and red powder thrown about for joy

Dalpatram says he wrote the Forbes Vilas (1867) to show how in a gathering of poets they handle verses, and how by means of these compositions they delight the hearts of the patrons or princes who hold such gatherings. He had in mind one such gathering held at the instance of Forbes in 1852 at Idar, but the verses

(b) In describing an evening forest scene, he says (p. 30 Vol. I of the Dalpat Kavya)

(a) ગાયો ચરી ગામ મળી વહે છે,
જુદી પડેલી સમુદ્ધે મળે છે:
ઘણી નદીઓ મળી એક રાદ,
જાગે થયો જાન્હવિનો પ્રવાહ.

The cows turn back towards the village after grazing those that had strayed, now rejoin the herd. It appears as if many (small) rivers had come together and become a great river like the Ganges

One certainly misses here the sense of quiet and restfulness conveyed by Gray's Elegy, where he too describes such a scene

"The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea

(b) ઘંટા તળા ચાર ટકોર વાગ્યા,
હયોગી લોકો જન સર્વ જાગ્યા.

The gong struck four and all those who had business to do woke up.

(c) સિંધુ કરે છે બહુ ધુધવાટ,
તરંગ આવી અથડાય ષાટ. p 32

The sea makes a very roaring noise. The waves come and strike against its shores

(d) સ્ત્રીઓ દિવાની દિવટ્યો કરે છે,
હાથેલિયો બે વચમા ધરે છે. p. 33.

The women make wicks by rolling them between their palms. The lines that follow (b) (c) (d) to make up the stanza disclose some fanciful resemblance of these incidents to others

which the poets composed were in Vraj and Charan, while Dalpatram makes his poets talk Gujarati. The fact is, by the time (1867) that Dalpatram thought of composing the "Poets' Fair" as he calls it to commemorate the interest that Forbes took in the matter he had forgotten much of what had happened there and hence out of his own mind he created a whole chapter of incidents, and spread them over nearly forty pages. He calls it a mixture of fact and fiction, and a majority of the verses bear the familiar stamp of his handiwork. The idea is that Forbes as the President of the gathering calls upon each poet to compose verses on some subject chosen by him, and the poet does so. Some other poet sitting there feels inclined to find fault with the composition, and he recites his own verses and the Darbar rolls on merrily like that. Of course, it is difficult to find any good poetry in such verses, made to order. The desert is relieved here and there by an oasis of a commendable fanciful conception or comparison, but on the whole there is nothing striking in the chapter, though perhaps it still might delight children or the masses or the less educated class of people. The Elegy on the death of Forbes which took place in 1865 called the Forbes Virah, is a much better performance. In him Dalpatram lost his best friend, philosopher and guide and his heart was deeply touched. Out of the fulness of his heart, he spoke. His loss was irreparable and in recounting the different favours and tokens of friendship received by him from Forbes, even though he does not get out of his leaning towards the jungle

(*) उत्पत्ति आज अति मावणी जणाय,
लेनायी बैक जन तो अतिशे भुझाय

* * * * *

In this season many bugs breed, which is the cause of annoyance to many persons

of words and tricks of rhyme he has been able to write verses which would appeal to the heart of his reader, and convey to him the sense of the loss of a friend.

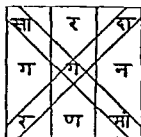
The Vijay Vinod which depicts the same kind of circumstances as the Forbes Vilas is marred by the same faults. It is an imaginary 'Poets' Fair' held by H. H. Vijayasinhji, the late Thakor Sahib of Bhavnagar, after whom it is named, and his Poet-guests laboured hard to turn out pieces of poetry, which would, when read in a certain way mean one thing and something different when read in another,¹ or to make verses proposing questions the letters or words of whose answers could be arranged in a geometrical figure.² In fact, he calls it the *काव्यतरंग भवेकार्य काव्य* i. e., waves of poetry containing verses with many meanings.

¹ See at p. 155 Vol. II of the Dalpat Kavya

जाजम पुरि छे जो अहीं, जो अहीं आजमराय,
आजमना दूतो बळी, चित्र विचित्र जणाय

The description applies with a slight difference in reading to the Court of Jama (Yama) the Lord of Death and to that of a Prince whose title was Ajam.

² An answer to eight questions propounded in verse is given in three words (सारदा गगन, रणमा) arranged in a geometrical figure thus



See p. 173 Vol. II of
the Dalpat Kavya

Dalpatram's *Vena Charitra* would perhaps be considered his best work from every point of view. The *Vena Charitra* cause in support of which he composed it and the form in which he cast it, were worthy of the pen of one who felt keenly the injustice of a social usage, which allowed a free license to a widower to re marry and put a ban on the remarriage of a widow, however young or helpless.

A young prince Vena by name, is the hero of his story and he has narrated his adventures in the form in which an old poet like *Premanand* or *Girdhar* would narrate an *Alkhyān*. He has even adopted the same old form of verses (देही). Vena, while returning from a visit to his mother *Sunitha's* parents in her company came across a young woman, *Kamala* by name, who was preparing to burn herself on a funeral pyre on a lonely river bank. On inquiring as to who she was and why she was thus immolating herself, she told him her whole distressful history her being left a widow when a mere child, the subsequent death of her parents the promptings of youth when she came of age, the disdain with which she was treated by society at large and specially the miserable life she led at her brother's where his wife lost no opportunity of showing contempt for her although she worked like a slave. The story was heart rending and Vena promised to redress the wrong within eight months if she desisted from the violence she wanted to commit. Highly creditable as it must be considered to her *Sunitha* supported her son and they succeeded in persuading *Kamala* to abandon her idea of self immolation. Vena, on return to his capital was greatly opposed by his Brahmin subjects in carrying out his object. They were staunch supporters of the old system although *Parashara* in his *Smṛiti*, as he assured Vena in a vision had sanctioned such union for the *Kali Yuga*. *Kamala* had consented to

remarry only a man of her caste, and it was nearly at the end of the stipulated period that Vena could find out a bachelor from her caste, who would brave excommunication and consent to take her to wife. In the meantime he had come across an illegitimate, new born child suffocated to death and on finding out the culprit, a young widow, he was moved by her pathetic appeal against the unjust social usage, to forgive her, and more than ever to prosecute his campaign against it. Kamala and the bachelor Navrangi were married, and Vena propounded a law that no widow if she wished to remarry should be forcibly compelled to remain unmarried. There are several subsidiary incidents narrated in the poem, which do not touch the main story. They are pathetic and humorous,¹

¹ The description of a bachelor's life—a bachelor intensely bent on marriage but not able to get a suitable bride—is both pathetic and humorous . p. 217, Vol. II of the Dalpat Kavya.

जन्मकुंडली लई जोशीने प्रश्न पूछवा जाकं,
जोशी जूठी अवधो कहे पण, हुं मनमां हरखाकं.
मस्केरीमां पण जो कोई मारी, करे विधानी वात,
हुं तो साचेसार्धा मानुं, याउ रुदे रळियात.
अरे प्रभु ! ते अगणित नारी, अवनी पर उपजावी,
पण मुज अरये एकज घडता, आळस तुजने आवी

* * * *

पनघट उपर प्रभातमां जई बगनी पेरे बेसुं,
विधविधना विचार करुं पण, एधी अर्थे सरे शुं?
रस्ते जाती रामाओना, टोळे टोळां देखुं,
निरखीने निसासा नांझुं, अभाग्य मारुं लेसु.
पक्षी, वेर, चर्चा, पेत्याने, शोरे, चीर, उजळी, नाशकुं,
बळ्या जळ्या भाखरा बनावी, खांत विनानुं खावुं.

and furnish a very good instance of what Dalpatram was capable of doing under the influence of deep feeling

स्मशान सरसु पर भासे, ने चिता सजगती सज्जा,
अधिक अतरनी बात उचरता, लागे छे मने लज्जा.
वासणनी उतरेवडने एक, रातु घघ्न ओढाहु,
उभा छो बहु ! एम कही, मारा मनने हु रमाहुं.
गनी जोडे उमो रहीने, एम विचारं आप,
आ जेवडी बन्धा आये तो, बढती शा सताप ?
एक दोरहु रई तेनी घरमाळा बेश बनायी,
मारा ने उतरेवडना में बंठ विपे पहिरापी.
कहु बालो बहु चोरीमा, तमने आपीश मुख माग्यु,
खैचायाधी खशी पडी, वासामा मुजने वाग्युं.
हसता मारे लातो जा भाई ! होय प्रियानी प्रीत्यो,
में मारे मन एम गण्युं, मने आज ओरियो वीक्यो.

With my horoscope I would go to an astrologer and question him as to the time when I should be married. He would name a date and though I knew he was lying, I would be greatly pleased *

Even if some one were to hint in jest about my marriage, I would take it seriously and be greatly delighted. O God ! when Thou hast created innumerable women on this earth, didst Thou feel tired of creating only one more for me ?

Stork like I attend regularly, every morning, the river ghat where women come to fetch water. There various thoughts come into my mind, but to no purpose

I look at crowd after crowd of women passing on the road. I look at them and sigh and bewail my misfortune

Thereafter, I go home, heat water myself and take a bath, after which I cook my food which would be either burnt or otherwise spoilt and eat it without relish

* Dalpatram in his Essay called देवहृददर्पण has thoroughly ridiculed the practices of the upstart astrologers and exposed them p. 234. साठीतु साहित्य.

Dalpatram took special care to write in an easy style, such as women and children would understand, and in spite of his study of Vraj and Sanskrit, his Gujarati even when stiffened with Sanskrit words here and there, never lost its simplicity.

My home appears to me like the burning ground and my bed the blazing pyre. Modesty prevents me from narrating further the feelings of my heart.

I covered a number of vessels stacked one on the top of another, with a red *sari* and amused myself by calling out "Are you standing there my wife?"

I then stood by the side of that cloth covered pile, and beguiled myself into thinking that if I were to get a wife as tall as that stack I should have no complaint.

I then took a piece of rope and made of it a bridal garland and threw it on my neck as well as on the stack.

Thereafter I addressed the latter, and said 'Come along my bride, to the marriage altar and I will give you all you want.' The result was that the pulling of the rope upset the stack, the vessels fell down and in doing so struck me in the back.

I thought to myself it does not matter, my beloved must have kicked me in joke while talking love, and I have undergone that longed for experience to-day.

* * * * *

The verses in which the young mother who murdered her child excuses herself and throws the whole blame on the custom which consigns her to widowhood for life are very pathetic.

इत्याना करनारी हु नही, बडो नहि मुज बाक,
बगर गुने मारा जाउ छु, हु तो अबला छु राक. इत्यानी.

* * * * *

I am not the murderer, the principal fault is not with me. I, a poor helpless woman, am being sacrificed without being guilty p. 233, Vol. II of the Dalpat Kavya.

city¹ This accounts for his great popularity and several of his verses (specially his *garbis*) have become part of the people's literature²

1 His *जीसभाषण* or dialogues between women written to show Forbes how Gujarati women spoke is an instance in point. It exactly reproduces their household talk and language. He says somewhere that in order to test the easiness of his style he would read out his verses to children and women before publishing them and in the light of the experience gained make suitable alterations

- 2
(a) निशाले जवा विषे
आवजो आवजो आवजो रे,
आज वहेला निशाले आवजो,
बेहेनी मने बोलावजो रे,
आज वहेला निशाले आवजो

p 219 Vol I of the Dalpat Kavya

- (b) सुदरबाईने शिखामणनी गरबी,
सुदरबाई चाल्या सासरीए,
माबाप शिखामण आपे बेहेन,
लाज वधारजो लाखेणी

p 223 Vol I of the Dalpat Kavya

- (c) राम तथा लक्ष्मण वनमा जाता सीताने रामे कहेलु,
राम लक्ष्मण वनमा सीषावता,
सती सीताने आवता साय,
कहे रघुनाथ, पधारो पायरमणी

p 238 Vol I of the Dalpat Kavya

- (d) पूरी एक अधेरी ने गडु राजा,
टके शेर भाजी टके शर खाजा
कभी चीज बेचाय त्या भाव एके,
कदि सारी बुरी न बेचे विवेके

p 138 Vol II of the Dalpat Kavya.

In summing up this short notice of Dalpatram's poetical work, the opinion of Navalram, the reviewer in excelsis of Gujarati literature, should not be omitted. He is of opinion that Dalpatram's poetry is "prompted by sobriety of genius, by common sense in affairs of the world, is full of skill (चतुराई) and is such as would please the audience at a public gathering (सभारंजनी). Now and then he uses all the nine Rasas, but he does it with good judgment, i.e., he does not transgress the limits of propriety. Excess of any particular Rasa in poetry is looked upon by him as madness. To observe the world dispassionately and extract from it practical lessons suited the genius of Dalpat best. His style is free from passion and therefore he considers it a great happiness to enjoy innocent pleasures in moments of leisure. Mild humour, latent sarcasm, sweetness in language and skill of various sorts, these adorn the quiet and instructive descriptions of Dalpat."¹ In a word he was a sober, simple, unaggressive poet who neither in thought or action would hurt any one's feelings, but strove to carry out his object, by pleasing his readers, and in pleasing

This poem gives an entertaining description of how justice is administered in a backward native state, where an innocent person is hanged in place of the criminal.

फूलगर्जनी गरबी.

फूलगर्जनी तमे फुलाव्या केम फुल्या रे, फूलगर्जनी.

आ उपजस्त्रचनौ अदस्रो केम भुल्या? मारा फूलगर्जनी.

p. 150, Vol. II of the Dalpat Kavya.

This again is a humorous description of a fool, whom his friends persuade to spend money beyond his means, on a -----
their applause.

them show them the right path. As such he has had no worthy successor.¹

Amongst those whose works display distinct traces of imitation of Dalpatram's style may be named, Followers of his school of poetry Bulakhiram Chakubhai, Ranchhod Galuram, and a Mahomedan school teacher Nana Miyan.² Ranchhod Galuram was considered a verse writer of some merit at the time and his Ranchhod Kavya Sudha (1863), is a collection of verses on Morals and of several stories and Akhyans. Bulakhiram was a favourite of Dalpatram whom he assisted in publishing the Dalpat Kavya. He was nothing but a clever rhymster. His book the Kavya Kausubh is full of these wordy feats. Amongst those who were distinctly under the influence of the school represented by Dalpatram may be mentioned Harjivan Kuber,⁴ Kavi Bhavanishankar of Limbdj in Kathiawad,⁵

¹ It may interest some to know that master as he was of Gujarati, even his language has not passed through the ordeal of the critic unscathed. See page 8 of the Diwali Issue of the "Gujarati" for A.D. 1913 where the contributor finds a number of faults in his language, and observance of the rules of prosody and figures of speech. युद्ध मचाववो for युद्ध मचाववुं, चापल्यता for चापल्य, अकसोसवा verb from अकसोस.

² Pp. 147 and 185 of साठीना साहित्यतुं दिग्दर्शन.

³ He was clever in पादपूर्ति which means, proposing part of a stanza or a proverb or a phrase as part of a stanza to another, which the other has to compose and complete.

⁴ His work called the Chavda Charita ran into a second edition under a Sanskrit name, Chapotkat Chantra and was meant to be an Epic poem.

⁵ He died recently (1921) and contributed verses to such Parsi Magazines as the Stri Bodh and others where he was considered a valued contributor. His book, the "Great Inventions of the World" was brought out many years ago.

Keshavram,¹ Dalpatram Dullabhram,² Chhotalal Sevakram,³ Shivalal Dhaneshwar,⁴ and Ganpatram Rajaram⁵

1 'Keshav Krati' is the name given to a collection of his verses which are written on moral, religious and such other topics

2 He was a Visnagara Nagar Brahmin of Surat and had a very good voice for singing. For a number of years he used to teach boys and girls in the Broach Municipal Primary Schools the poetical portions of their text books. He has written many books of which *दलपतकृत कान्य, दलपतकृत गरबावली, भाषाभूषण* (1878), a work on the *अलंकारसकलशास्त्र निरूपण*, (1890), published with the assistance of H. H. the Maharaja of Bhavnagar in which he has versified all arts and sciences, Astrology, Architecture, even the art of riding, deserve to be noticed as testifying to his love for his work.

3 Although belonging to an illiterate caste—that of goldsmiths he attained to a high position in the state of Cutch and was tutor to H. H. the Maharao. He was a good student of Vraj and has translated two celebrated works—the *Tulsi Sat Sai* and the *Vrand Sat Sai*—into Gujarati verse besides writing an elegy on the death of his daughter. He has written some prose works also

4 He also served in Cutch as a tutor to H. H. The Maharao's brother. He went to England with H. H. at the time of Queen Victoria's Jubilee. His *प्रवास वर्णन* has run into a second edition (1916). It has taken for its model the verses of Dalpatram and Narmadashankar on the same subject and has catalogued in it the natural beauties of places like Poona and Mahabaleshwar, interspersing them with moral and didactic observations. However, he is better known by his translation of *Tulsi-das' Ramayan* (1875) into Gujarati from Vraj. It is a translation in the old style, but Navalram thinks that "it made him fit to enter the ranks of poets," and another writer is so enthusiastic over the way in which he has been able to translate the spirit of the great Hindi Poet's work into Gujarati that he recommends every one to read it if he wishes to pass his time in delight (p 126, *साठीनुं साहित्य*). His other works are *मेघदूत, दिवाहवर्णन, काव्यकलाप*, and *भारतनुं पदं* (unpublished)

5 He belongs to Ahmedabad and had served for a long time in the Educational Department and there come in contact with its veterans like R. B. Mobanlal and R. S. Mahipatram. His verses on the life of the

The mention of the name of Narmadashankar (1833-1886) is calculated to send a thrill through the hearts of many Gujaratis. He is regarded as the pioneer of a new era in Gujarati prose and poetry. By far the best of his biographies is written by one of his intimate friends himself a well known man of letters, Navalram Lakshmiram. Narmada shankar was born in an intelligent community of Surat, viz the Nagar Brahmins and as his father happened to be serving in Bombay when he was born he was one of those who had come under the influence of the new spirit prevailing in Bombay in the fifties and sixties of the Nineteenth Century. He was thus a much more educated and better read poet than Dalpatram, who did not know English. Narmadashankar studied at the Elphinstone College for two or three years though rather intermittently (first in 1850 and then in 1854).¹ His Professors were pleased with his knowledge of English and being a studious young man of ambition he had during that period read a good deal of English Literature,² Shakes

wife of the latter called पार्वतीकुवर आरुयान as well as his लीलावती कथा are interesting but the several volumes of लघुभारत—an Epitome of the Mahabharat—(1903 and thereafter) will ultimately rescue his work from oblivion. They are written on the lines of Premanand's poems and for once remind the readers of his vigour of style simplicity of expression and appositeness of the metre to the subject. His History of Education in the Broach District (1877) and collection of Essays (कथनिबन्ध संग्रह 1885) are no better than the works of ordinary school teachers.

¹ The reason for this interval will appear rather curious to the present generation. Narmadashankar was married early in life and it was necessary therefore looking to the age of his wife that he should begin the life of a householder at once. Therefore he was sent to Surat in 1851 to live with his wife there and on her death he came back to Bombay and rejoined College.

² He composed verses in English. See e.g. those written to

peare, Byron Bacon, Lives of several English Poets and Reviews of Poetical Works ; these he read in addition to Sanskrit, Marathi and Hindi works, the study of which languages he developed in later years. Even at this early age (September 1855) he idolised Love and Courage,¹ though from the way in which he expressed his feelings, they appear to be those of a self-sufficient, unripe youth. He has left copious autobiographical notes, which shew the various moods and phases of life he passed through. In youth he was a gay Lothario, like Byron he went all astray. He was of opinion that living free from all restrictions contributed to feed the flame of poetry, and seeing life in all its phases, good as well as bad, enhanced the value of a poet's work. However as he grew older and began to face the stern realities of life, he became sober, though it must be said that till the last he could not get over some practices and habits innate in a native of Surat. Openhanded and generous even in adversity, refined in eating, drinking and dressing, with a predilection for feminine society, he remained till the last.²

Narmadashankar's life was one long struggle with poverty, After he made up his mind in September 1855 to devote his life to literature, he began to find the bonds of service irksome. Both in Surat and Bombay, he used to eke out a decent maintenance by private service. But even these precarious means of sub-welcome King Edward VII when he came to India as the Prince of Wales. p. 185 of the नर्मकविता.

¹ Narmadashankar calls them प्रेम (Love) and शौर्य (Courage). But these two feelings ultimately took the form of poetry and patriotism. p. 26, नर्मकविता, published by the Gujarati Printing Press (1914).

² For a defence of the practice of eating flesh and drinking wine, see page 301 of the नर्मकविता.

sistence he gave up. He says ' On this day (23rd November 1858) I came here and looking at my pen with tears in my eyes I said 'from now I place my head in your lap ' Thus was a brave resolution but the eternal conflict of Sharada and Lakshmi Learning and Wealth proved as disastrous to him as to others and Narmadashankar realised almost at every step thereafter that in dedicating himself solely to literature he had courted poverty. In order to retrieve this improvident step he resorted to various means he gave tuitions to Europeans he wrote plays for the stage¹ he even recited Kathas like a Hardas but none of these much less the income derived from his publications could bring him enough money to satisfy his wants. Small debts accumulated into large ones and as if even that was not sufficient he added to them by building a large house at Surat dedicating it to the public. He called it the Temple of Minerva (सरस्वतीमंदिर) He had his name and his motto प्रेमशौर्य (Love and Courage) with his crest a rose and a pen painted on it. This cost him from twelve to thirteen thousand Rupees and about the time of his death it was with great difficulty that he was able to pay off his liabilities. Pathetic stories of his indigence, and the calmness with which he faced it, are related, and it is said that once his means in Bombay had run so low that he had to dine off a plate of parched rice moistened with a little milk.² Assistance rendered to him in such dark moments by his Parsi admirers stands out like the proverbial silver lining to the cloud.³ Fortunately till the death of his father which

¹ (1876) He did not succeed much as a play wright. The work brought him about 1300 Rupees in all.

² A dish which would cost an anna only. He is said to have possessed only a four anna piece at times.

³ One of them sent him a currency note for Rs. 500 by post without revealing his identity when the Kavi's exchequer was at its lowest.

took place in 1864 Narmadashankar was comparatively well off and the old man had the satisfaction of seeing his son occupying a position of some importance in Bombay, before he left for Surat in 1863 to die there the next year. Late in life, the Educational Department assisted him by purchasing his books for school libraries and before he died, the late Col. Watson Political Agent of Kathiawad had entrusted him with the work of translating the Kathiawad Gazeteer into Gujarati, promising him a good sum in return. Added to these was the monthly salary of Rs. 100 (later Rs. 200), which his friends got for him by prevailing upon him to accept private service once again. Seeing no way out of the chronic state of poverty and indebtedness to which he was reduced, he consented to take up the post of Secretary to the princely Gokuldas Tejpal Charities at Bombay, but the breaking of the promise he had made to himself twenty four years ago, of abjuring all service save that of Sarasvati, broke his heart and on the day he joined his new post he did so with tears in his eyes. He never liked his friends to allude to that subject at all, and even this involuntary surrender to stress of circumstances, he brought to an end within three years and a half (1882 to July 1885), by resigning the post. While in office, he did his work most creditably, and placed the several branches of the Charities on a sound footing.

The most prominent feature of Narmadashankar's life was its unconventionality. In the first flush of youth he went the way of heedless men, and indulged in physical pleasures to an unrestrained extent. Notes written by him help us to mark the different moods through which he passed. absence of self-restraint, then morbidity, then destitution, with a single com-

His uncon-
ventionality

mon factor appearing in all those moods, viz, self-conceit, i.e., his firm belief that he was somebody and was capable of doing something. He has been much upbraided for his relations with the other sex. He has made no secret of it, and he seems to attribute it to his state of widowerhood, for a time. His first wife died in child bed in October 1853. He was again married in 1856 and set up house with his second wife,—who survived him—in 1860. Five years thereafter he gave shelter to a widow of his own caste in Surat, and his caste people not approving of the step, excommunicated him. Somehow or other he got over the ban, but soon after he sheltered another such widow, and is said to have secretly married her (1869). This bold step alienated for ever the sympathy of his community, and till the end of his life he was never reconciled to them. A son of this widow survived Narmadashankar. This overfondness for the other sex has coloured a large part of his poetry, and the frequency with which one meets with clandestine love-episodes in his verses is a stain on his poetical work.

The last days of the poet were very unhappy. He was ill and confined to bed for nearly eight months. His last days with a complaint resembling rheumatism. But he retained his strong will power and consciousness till the last hour. In spite of the best medical assistance, he died on 25th February 1886, and it must be said to the credit of his caste people in Bombay that however much they were angry with him for his social and domestic lapses, they gathered together in large numbers for the last obseques.¹

¹ It is considered an ignominy for a high caste Hindu to be carried to his last resting place by members of any other community than his own. Although he was outcasted, his caste fellows showed their good sense not only in attending his funeral but by showing a desire to admit his widow—Dahigavri—into the caste.

Many people are still alive who have seen Narmadashankar in flesh and blood. But those who have not

His personal appearance had the pleasure of doing so, can still fairly judge of his personal appearance by his two photographs which have by now become familiar. One of them was published along with the first edition of his collected prose writings (નર્મદગચ્છ, 1865), when he was 27 years old.¹ The pose—the first finger of the right hand touching the right temple, and the face exhibiting preoccupation and reflection, with eyes a little lowered but looking straight, as if trying to penetrate into the infinite space in front of him—may appear to some to be studied, but the likeness is very faithful. A tall, slim figure, a large and wide forehead though somewhat hidden by a round Brahmanical turban of the old type—as big as a mill-stone—worn slightly awry, an aquiline nose, medium lips, a firm chin, long arms, the body swathed in the old fashioned Angarkha tied with strings, easily help one to make him out to be a remarkable personality. His other photograph published along with the later (1914) edition of the same book, represents him standing. Beyond that there is no difference between the two. In dress he was showy, and fond of fine clothes.²

Resoluteness and courage of conviction distinguished

his character. At first sight, it might strike one on reviewing the notes furnished by his own pen of his varying moods, that he was a man of unsteady and changing views. Even if that were

¹ It was a steel plate engraving, brought out from Germany. With mock modesty, he calls it his 'આકૃતિ', a slang word for "face."

² My eldest brother tells me that the Kavi used sometimes to come to our house in the early sixties of the last century at Surat dressed in a pair of trousers. It was very unusual then and consequently bold of him to do so.

correct which it is not, it would be so only in the case of the less important aspects of his life, such as partaking forbidden food or drink, eating at the same table with non-Hindus or neglecting to perform Sandhya rites¹ for days and then taking them up again. But during these early years he never wavered in his allegiance to the principles of the new creed of "Reform," which was then stirring the minds of the educated classes. Education of women, reform in the religious observances of the Vaishnava sect, widow remarriage and such other burning topics of the day found in him a staunch advocate, and his powerful pen was always wielded in laying bare the evils that ate then into the vitals of society, as some of them do even now. In politics he spoke out freely also, but politics had not in his time assumed that acute and democratic phase which it has done at the present moment.

No sketch of Narmadashankar's life or character would be complete without a reference to the complete change that came over his views about 1865-66. Till then he was in matters religious and social, a great admirer of the "new" ideas then in the air. The Vedas, the Vedant philosophy, the Puranas as well as the old and orthodox ways of his compatriots were in his opinion so many mill-stones round their necks in the matter of advance and progress. Whatever was old was useless and should go, whatever was new, *i.e.*, Western, was good and should take the place of the old, that, in short, was the prevailing view then. He had left the fold of the conservatives in religion and had inclined towards the view of the Brahmo Samaj, till 1860-61. Then came a period of thinking and cogitation, and he went over to the other side. This change

Change of
views

¹ An indispensable daily ritual in a high caste Hindu's life

which ultimately brought him back from the *प्रवृत्तिमार्ग*, life of action, to the *निवृत्तिमार्ग*, life of inaction, is by some critics considered a great blot on his character. Narmadashankar says that this change was due to a wide and deep study of history which he had to undergo for the purpose of writing a History of the World (*राज्यरत्न*) in Gujarati. He came to think that the condition or thought of a country can be changed only after a long apprenticeship and preparation, and a change cannot be forced on it as the result of the working or endeavours of a single individual. He thought that the Reformers were following wrong methods in advocating a policy of destruction. The bogey of inconsistency did not deter him from giving publicity to this change of views which he knew would surely raise a chorus of condemnation from his old friends. That it did do, but he was not dismayed, and his later views were embodied in a considered volume of essays, called the *धर्मविवेचन*, which he published in 1885.

A very able explanation of this change is given by Navalram in his life of the poet, where he appeals for a larger exercise of the spirit of toleration amongst Gujaratis than is usually found. Any way, with the reform party this break in consistency dimmed the lustre of his otherwise brilliant "Reform" career.

Very few Gujaratis can have undergone that deliberate apprenticeship and preparation for a life of literary occupation that Narmadashankar did. From the moment he made up his mind to devote himself to poetry he exerted himself in preparing for his task by reading widely in various languages, Sanskrit, Hindi, English. But even before that time, we

have seen that he was voraciously reading English and Gujarati poetical works. He had been founding societies, before whom he was in the habit of reading papers and essays on various subjects. His knowledge of Sanskrit then was very much like that of an ordinary Brahmin boy : *i.e.*, he knew the rituals, but he increased it a great deal afterwards and took particular care to study prosody. Poetics, *अलङ्कारशास्त्र* (Science of Rhetoric and Figures of Speech) and drama by going to Poona specially for the purpose. There was no prosody worth the name existing in Gujarati at the time, and the efforts made by the Kavi to get himself initiated into that branch of poetry as narrated by him, are highly praiseworthy.¹

Narmadashankar has written much poetry but more prose. His sterling work lies in the latter direction but he was always known, and he loved to be known as a कवि (poet) and hence that phase of his literary life has come to assume a factitious importance. A list of all his works—prose and poetical—can be found in Navalram's life of the poet. They come to nearly 58 volumes but a fair idea of his worth can be gathered from two of his collected works, his *नर्मकविता* for his verses and his *नर्मग्रन्थ* for his prose writings. He was a student of old Gujarati poetry, and has published the lives of some of the old Gujarati poets and edited the works of Dayaram, the *दशमस्कन्ध* and Nalakhyan of Premanand and the *Padas* of Manohar Swami, a Swamunarayan poet.

¹ He says somewhere that the late Mr. Manmohandas Ranchhoddas Jhaveri, the uncle of the present writer, was the first to initiate him into this line. See pp. 24 et seqq. of Navalram's life of Narmadashankar, on his subject generally.

From 1858 to 1865 was the most fruitful period of Narmadashankar's poetical life. His best work was turned out during that period, and though he wrote verses thereafter, his reputation as a poet was made at this time. As the successive issues¹ of his *नर्मकविता* were published his name began to be more and more in people's mouths. Poems depicting the sad fate of a Hindu widow, with suggestions for ameliorating it by removing the restriction on her second marriage, created a great stir amongst both the conservatives and the reformers, and his subsequent works the *कतुवर्णन* (1861), the *वनवर्णन* (1862), and the *प्रवासवर्णन* were poems written in an altogether unusual style, while the verses on the decline of the Hindus (1864), lashing the old superstitious Hindu, and laying the axe at the root of the evil social customs which kept him down in the scale of humanity, were so successful that he called them "The Bible of the Social Reformer."

Just at the time when Narmadashankar was emerging into celebrity (1859), Dalpatram who had already won his laurels, happened to visit Bombay for treatment of his eyes. Lovers of Gujarati poetry brought both of them together, and in the poetical contest that took place, naturally they warmed up² and their audience took sides as to who was the better poet. The result was a lifelong estrangement between the two. Dalpatram being the milder, at least had

¹ Nos. 1, 2, 3, (1858), 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 (1859), 9, 10 (1860).

² The contest was continued in the public papers and a humorous paper, the *Parsi Punch*, published a cartoon, in which they were represented as fighting each other with the top knot of the hair of their heads in their hands.

the good sense to recognise the patriotism, courage and scholarship of Narmadashankar,¹ though the latter remained unrelenting²

For all practical purposes the volume of नर्मकविता comprises all poetry written by him. It was first published in the form of a collection by himself in 1866. It contained all his work between 1855 and 1866. He has written a preface

1 See his दलपतकाव्य, part 2, page 262, where speaking of Narmadashankar's Sarasvati Mandir, he says માણસમાત્રમાં કાંઈં છામી હોય છે તે સામુ ન જોતા ગુણનું પ્રહણ કરવું એવી નજરથી જોતાં આ કવિ સ્વદેશાભિમાની, હિમતવહાદૂર, વિદ્વાન અને દેશમા ઘણો ઉપયોગી હતો એમાં સશય નથી.

2 Narmadashankar's littlemindedness would be seen from the following instances —

(1) Dalpatram disclaimed vanity, and preferred not to illustrate his writings with any of his own photographs as Narmadashankar had done. On the title page of his Dalpat Kavya appeared the following verses, inviting the public not to judge him by his exterior but by the quality of his work. —

“શું જોશો તનની છવી, એમાં નથી નવાઈ,
નિરહો મુજ મનની છવી, મલા પરીક્ષક માઈ.”

What is there to see in the picture of my person? There is nothing unusual in it. Dear critic, examine rather the picture of my mind. Narmadashankar retorted thus in a periodical called સ્વતંત્રતા (of August 1879).

“મનની તો છવી જોઈને ઉપજે સશય ધામ,
છે આ દલપતરામ કે અમદાવાદી * * * ?”

The ellipsis can be easily supplied. It is the word હજામ (a barber). Barbers in Surat wore the Ahmedabadī turban and the taunt levelled at all inhabitants of Ahmedabad is that they are barbers. The lines mean : after looking at the picture of your mind the doubt arises whether it represents Dalpatram or a Hajam (barber) from Ahmedabad.

to it, which strikes the same note of self-admiration as is found all throughout his work. He says he has found very few peo-

A self compla-
cent critic ple of his acquaintance who could understand or follow his work, and that therefore he was obliged to write notes at the foot of each piece in order to make the readers understand the meaning and marvel (अमल्लक्षित) of it. He has further assumed the function of a critic, and graded his own work, dividing it into three classes, each class being further subdivided into three more. We miss in him the simplicity and modesty of Dalpatram.

(2) When Rao Saheb Mahipatram returned from England, Dalpatram took his side and said that Mahipatram would never undergo the प्रायश्चित्त ceremony to placate his caste. But he ultimately did do so and Narmadashankar ridiculed Dalpatram by asking him to eat his own words :

“ नागर नर हारे नहिं, हारे होय हजाम,
इत्यादिक फेरव हवे डाह्या दलपतराम.”

डोडियो: पुस्तक बीजु, अंक ८ मो, पानुं८५मुं. ता. १५ मी नवंबर १८६७.

The first line is a quotation from Dalpatram's panegyric * Though the last two words of the second line by Narmadashankar apparently mean, "Wise Dalpatram," the sting lies in his interpretation of डाह्या into दोढडाह्या, overwise, a wiseacre, or of डाह्या दलपतराम into the reversal of, the natural order of his name, दलपतराम डाह्याभाई, thus making Dalpatram the progenitor of his own father.

* It was contained in the following lines written when Mahipatram t to England in 1860

नागर नर हारे नहिं, हारे होय हजाम,
कहेवत तैं सार्ची करीं राखीं महीपतराम.

(दलपत काव्य, Vol. I. p. 403)

The poems concern themselves with such subjects as advice to people on religious, moral, social and economic questions, the miseries of a Hindu widow, patriotism, courage and liberty, love, description of different places and of nature during travel, decline of the Hindu community, devotional (ज्ञान, वैराग्य and भक्ति) and epic matters, and several other topics, which were of importance at the time. Laudatory verses were written, such as those on Lord Ripon and laments like that on the death of Prince Albert. He also attempted to write verses with a liberal use of Persian words on the model of Persian poems, and also some in Hindi. Like Dalpatram, he also exerted himself in the cause of Reform and contributed towards the removal of superstitious and evil practices. In fact, many such subjects as intemperance (केक), education of women, the Share Mama of 1865, keeping connexion with England returned individuals, are common to them both. His verses shew more forcefulness and vigour than those of Dalpatram. Narmadashankar felt the absence of any book on prosody in Gujarati very keenly, and with admirable assiduity and solicitude, he got together Hindi and Sanskrit works on that subject and studied them. Similarly he made a thorough study of the various kinds of रस and अलंकार. As a result he was able to publish his *पिंगलप्रवेश*, an introduction to prosody, in Gujarati, in 1857.¹ His *अलंकारप्रवेश* (1858) and *रसप्रवेश* (1858) have run through more than one edition and his *नयिकाविषयप्रवेश* was also a pioneer work.

¹ It went through a second edition in 1860 and a third in 1866. As his father showed a desire to see such a book published Narmadashankar has fitly dedicated it to him. The subject has not been neglected and Kavi Dalpatram Ranchhodhbhai Udayram (जणपिंगल) and several others have published books on it.

Discarding such verses as were written with a didactic object, such as, those on intoxicants, or social impurity, or the miseries of enforced widowhood, Narmadashankar deserves the honour of being the first writer of subjective poetry in Gujarati and finding in nature and natural scenery subjects for a poet's pen. In considering the subject of poetry from both points of view, English and Indian, in his Essays R. B. Ramanbhai M. Nilkanth has been able to show that after all there is not much difference in the views of writers in the two languages. Emotion according to them plays an essential part in good poetry. Wordsworth's definition that¹ "poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings; it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity," seems to find favour in his eyes,² and he quotes with approval the view of Narmadashankar in the following words,³ to show that he had a true perception of what good poetry should be: "Scenes of nature impressed me greatly from my childhood; the impression was no doubt dim. These dim impressions had begun to come out in the form of pictures at the time when I stayed at Surat for three years, and was moving about in villages; and after

¹ See p. 859 of Complete Poetical Works of William Wordsworth with an Introduction by John Morley, published by MacMillan and Co., (1888).

² See his Essay on કવિતા in his book called કવિતા and સાહિત્ય.

³ કુદરતના દેખાવની છાપ મારા મન ઉપર બાળપણમાંથીજ સારી પેઠે પડી હતી. અલબત્ત જ્ઞાંતી તો સ્તરી. એ જ્ઞાંતી છાપો જ્યારે હું વ્રજ વરસ સુરતમાં રહ્યો હતો, ને ગામડાઓમાં ફરતો હતો ત્યારે ચિત્રરૂપે યવા આવી હતી, તે કવિતા શરૂ કર્યા પછી પ્રસંગ તથા વિચારને જોરે આપોઆપ આવેલું ચિત્રરૂપે યહાર નીકળી પડી છે.

I began to write poetry, they (the impressions) came out spontaneously, in the form of vivid pictures as a result of getting opportune moments and thought ' Unfortunately such passages, where "emotion recollected in tranquillity" plays an essential part, are very few in this long poem (the *ऋतुवर्णन*), and it must be said, that Narmadashankar has not been able to maintain the same level throughout.

As a part of his scheme for the wholesale encouragement of social reform and participation in it, he
 Miseries of young widows has written much on the miseries of young widows and for sanction of their re-marriage by their castes. Besides several scattered verses he has embodied his sentiments in a series of poems called *वैधव्य चरित्र*¹ That he felt for them sincerely and that the object with which he wrote was highly commendable is not open to doubt. In the notes, which are almost everywhere too heavy and which are an invariable feature of his work, he says that in composing one poem, *विधवावेह*,² he actually wept. He was both sentimental and sensitive, and no wonder if he shed tears. But the manner in which he writes and the tone pervading the poems, is extremely objectionable. The pitfalls in the way of a young widow and her lapses are described with such nauseating details that one turns away from them in disgust. The same subject has been handled by Dalpatram, and later by Narsinhrao B. Divatia, but they, specially the latter, have been able to describe it in a way that invites pity and sympathy for the widow's fate

1 Pages 48 to 83 of the *नमकावली*, Gujarati Press

2 Page 65 Ibid

This tendency of Narmadashankar to revel in improper details reached its climax in his *ऋतुवर्णन*. In youth his vocabulary was full of the terms of love, which bordered on lewdness. The beloved or mistress (प्रिया), the wounded (घायल) and bereaved lover (दर्दी) the intoxicated (मस्त) rake (फाकडो) the lover steeped in passion (इश्की) the use of such words and a description of the activities of such passion ridden people in all their naked and unashamed details delighted him. In the *ऋतुवर्णन* he sets to himself the task of depicting the feelings of a well to do girl 17 or 18 years of age who had lived with her husband for six or seven months and was then suddenly left alone, the husband going to a foreign place on business. She pours out the feelings of her heart before her maid servant and describes the different pleasures she would have enjoyed in the company of her beloved husband had he been with her through the different seasons and the plight to which she was reduced on account of his absence. While writing this poem he says he had gone through the celebrated work of Kalidas' *ऋतुसंहार* in Sanskrit and Thomson's *Seasons* in English but while they confined themselves to a mere description of outward nature and its manifestations during the various seasons, he claims to have improved upon them by describing outward nature and at the same time giving a vivid picture of the heroine's own mental state as a reflected image of the outward appearances in nature.¹

1 One or two examples would make this clear

नाळा नदीनु जळ जेम पीधु, सूर्ये वियोगे नुर चुसी लीधु,
खारे भरी हु खडियां स्वरुपे, खुचू सगाने घणी हूनी धूपे (p 121)

The poet is describing *प्रोमक्कत*, the hottest part of the year. The lines mean as the sun has soaked up the waters of the brooks and

However that might be really good passages are far outnumbered by those which are indecent, coarse and vulgar. The notes are even worse than the text. Whatever was put in a suggestive form in the text has been explained with nauseating clarity in the notes. He was conscious of this grossness in his work. He admits that some people would look upon it with disgust, but his excuse was that he did not want his poem to be called imperfect and hence he has painted in the vogue or fashion of Sanskrit and Hindi writers several scenes from the art and science of love. His object was to make the immoral moral but if any one mistakes it and goes astray it should not be set down to the fault of the guide. The warning is well conceived but it is bound to fail of its purpose. He seems to have entertained an idea that descriptions of nature or individuals which can successfully be painted by the brush of a painter from the verses written by a poet have a high place in poetic literature. So that in several places in his works we meet with the remark

rivers so has the sun of bereavement sucked up (the) brightness (of my life) As the dried up salt earth full of clods hurts the feet so do I sulky and short tempered hurt (the feelings of) my relatives. The external barren and burning aspect of nature thus finds an echo in the heart of the heroine

चूतरस मदमातो, मर्द कोकील पेलो,
पल पल चुमि लेता स्त्रीशु याके न घेलो

These verses occur in the description of Spring when the vegetable and bird life feel intoxicated

That male *Kohli* bird intoxicated by the juice in blossoms of the Mango tree has become so mad that he does not tire of kissing his wife every moment

वर्णन चितरि देखडावाय नेबु छे, this is a description which can be painted¹ The poet himself classifies this poem as 1-1, first class first division, but we meet with lines which are an absolute bathos² The लघु ऋतुवर्णन (a short description of the seasons pp 161—166) as its title implies epitomises the larger work, and shares its faults

Narmadashankar found in nature and natural scenery a balm to his troubled mind which was grieving over 'the wound of faithlessness' Nature a balm (वेवचनीपणा—वेवफाईनो जखम, p 193) on his mistress' part He says 'I felt delighted if I saw a tree or a hill, a river or a brook or even a mud stained straw (in the rainy season) One wave of joy succeeded another so rapidly, that I felt transformed into joy itself This प्रवास वर्णन (Description of travel) of mine is full

- 1 एवी सुरात्री करमे न आवी, रंगीली हु केम रुड निभावी,
छूटे निमाळे पगताल मारी, हाथे घगाडी न सतार सारी p 128

In describing a full moon night in summer he imagines the couple when together sitting out on a whitewashed terrace dressed in white, and singing and then the heroine lamenting that being separated from her husband she is not destined to enjoy such a fair night a night where in with her hair streaming to the wind she would play on the sitar beating time with her feet along with it

- 2 सुवाळी आ चामडी फांगी जाये,
चीरा पडेयी बहु दुःख थाये p 142

The delicate skin becomes cracked (in winter) and consequently causes much pain

- म्होरो खर्या ने पसरी थळाइ. p 128

The mango blossoms dropped and prickly heat began (to assert its sway)

of the feeling of pure tranquillity (शुद्ध शांतिरस) ¹ A few specimens of his verses prompted by this "joy in nature" are given in the notes ² They are nothing more than a

¹ See p 202 of the नर्मकविता, Gujarati Press

² (a) तैयारी छे चुप चुप कहे कागडाओ नकीच,
सधु दीसे पवन न हिले शांत रुडु गमीर.
शोभा वर्णु शु हु झट पछी मेघराजा पधार्यो,
यसादीए हरखयी नमी स्वस्ति शब्दो पुकार्यो.

(In the monsoon), p 197.

The crows acting as the king's heralds are cawing "silence, silence" His Majesty arrives The wind stirreth not, everything appears quiet, beautiful and awe inspiring How can I describe the beauty of this scene? Anon comes King Rain The tree world boweth to him and uttereth the words of welcome

(b) Description of the river Narmada as seen from a boat en route to Kabir Vad from Broach

नर्मदा शु गाउ शोभा साजनी ?
हारे पवन पाणि वादळ रगना सुसाननी—होजीरे.
• • • • •
हारे गुलाबी घेरो ते रंग आसमाननो,
हारे गुलाबी फुलोना पाणीनो मेदाननो—होजीरे

Narmada how shall I sing thy beauty as seen at eventide? The beauty of wind, water, color, all harmoniously mixed The color of the sky was deep rose and of the expanse of water that of rose flowers.

(c) In describing the Kabir Vad, the famous Indian Fig Tree (Ficus Bengalensis) said to have been planted by Saint Kabir, he says:

भुरो मास्यो ज्ञाता, दूरयो धुमये पहाड सरखो,
नदी वणे उभो निरमदपणे एक सरखो.
दिस्त्यो हायों जोदो, हरि तपुं हृदये ध्यान धरतो,
सपारे एवते, कबिरवड ए शोक हरतो.

somewhat impassioned description of nature, with here and there a flash of poetic concert

From a distance it looked in the (morning) mist like a mountain, light blue (in colour) standing erect in the midst of the river. It looked like a vanquished hero absorbed in the meditation of Hari. In the quiet of the morning, the Kabir Vad carried off the cares (of the visitor)

One admirer of the Kavi has compared him to this tree, as described in the third line, a vanquished hero praying to God, when he saw him once on a public road in Surat, in days of poverty walking under a battered umbrella and in untidy dress (S M. Dikshit's paper in the Volume of the Transactions of the Second Gujarati Sahitya Parishad)

In his કવિતા and સાહિત્ય p 528, Rao Bahadur Ramanbhai commenting on these verses says that this mere stretch of imagination which metaphorically compares one thing with another is not an index of good poetry. The metaphors are not used to reveal any poetic sentiment.

નમંટેકરી અને તેપર કરેલા વિષારોમાંના કેટલાક (pp 268 to 273), though they relate exclusively to his troubles are full of descriptions of nature here and there and proclaim his faith in her

જેને વીજા વધરા કહે, તેને કવિજન હીરા લહે,
 બલીહારી છે કુદરત તળી, કવિ જુએ છે સુબી ઘણી,
 વીજા પણ સસ્કારી જેહ, પીએ એ પ્રે મામૃત તેહ, (p 272)

Those which are called stones by others appear gems to a poet - There is a meaning in nature in whom the poet sees many beauties Other people also who are blessed with that sense, drink that nectar of love

The beauties of Bombay as seen from the site of the present Hanging Gardens are described by him in the same strain (p 419) Verses on Nature as seen in villages and at large (pp 745 753) are not of much value, though in one place he represents himself as holding direct communion with Nature and being comforted by her (p 753)

Historical topics furnished his imagination better material than Nature. His many verses divided into three parts on the decline of the Hindu community (हिन्दुभोनी पડતી) in respect of learning (વિદ્યા), religion (ધર્મ), customs (રૂઢી), superstitions (વહેન) Native states (દેશી રાજ) 'foreign rule' (પરદેશી રાજ) [i.e., politically] morals (નીતિ) and recounting the brave deeds of old, whether in the North in the South or in Gujarat, whether of the Rajputs, Nagars Brahmins or Kshatras, looking with robust optimism into the future, are a feature of his work.¹ The notes set out his rather ambitious object of writing an epic in Gujarati and failing that some thing on the lines of Milton's *Comus* or Byron's *Don Juan*. He could do none of these but these verses which he wrote for want of some thing better are, to say the least very instructive, and quite a new thing in Gujarati Literature. The metre² chosen by him turns out to be an additional element in accomplishing his object. It adds great vigor to the effect meant to be conveyed by the subject. Many of the verses are of great poetic value as one sees that they come straight from the heart and without any effort. They give a vivid picture of the times when India was in the heyday of her prosperity and at the climax of her civilization and then trace her gradual decline till she reached the bottom in the scale of civilized nations.³ The conditions which encompassed the fall

¹ PP 39 to 430 નમરુચિત

² રોઝાવૃત્ત

³ હિંદુ દેશના હાલ, યયા છે મુઠા બાજે,
સત્તા મોટી યોદ્ધા, નિચું તે જોણ લાગે p 291

To-day the plight of India is pitiable. She has lost her great power and is looking down in shame

are given step by step and accurately from a historical point of view. Backwardness, conservatism, the influence of the Brahmins, the want of foresight in Indian native rulers, absence of harmonious relations between different castes and creeds, and many other like causes reduced India to a condition of stagnation and apathy and superstitions helped in keeping her tied down to that condition. Pernicious social usages, added their influence in leading to the deplorable state, and the poet's condemnation of all these evils is full of a fire and vigor worthy of the cause. He has laid his finger on many of these evils.¹ Those six occasions

1 (a) મને પુરુષ નહિ જ્યાંહ, કેમ સ્ત્રી મળતી દીસે ! p. 306.

. Where the man is illiterate how do you expect the woman to be literate ?

(b) ધીક્ક સ્ત્રીયોની રીત, ધીક્ક છાતી કૂટ્યાની,

* * *

ધીક્ક ચુડીની રીત, ધીક્ક યુગો પાઢ્યાની. p. 307.

He on the custom of women beating their bosoms in public (on the occasion of a death) He on the custom of a woman (whose husband is recently dead) breaking her bangles and living confined to her house (for a long period).

(c) દેશ પ્રીત હંકાર, છુપાં સૂતાં વહાં આજે ?

* * *

વિના દેશ અભિમાન દેશ ઉત્કર્ષ ન થાયે,
દેશ રાન સમસાન જેહલો શાવા ધાયે,
રાજ સમધી એક્ય નથી અહિના લોકોમાં.
જાતિ ધંધનો સુવ, જનો વાધોના મોમાં. p. 307.

Where are you lying concealed, oh ! love and pride of country ! Without pride for one's country, there can be no rise thereof. Our country is like a forest, like a corpse-burning ground, which frightens people

in history when Indians fought resolutely and in great force are very effectively described by him Porus against Alexander, Bhimadev against Mahmud of Ghazni at Somnath, Prathiraj at Panipat against Shahabuddin Ghorī, the Marathas on the same field against Mahomedans, the Sikhs against the British in 1845-48 Hindus under the Rani of Jhansi 1857 In order to equip himself for this part of his work he read a great deal of historical literature Tod's Rajasthan, Forbes' Ras Mala, Grant Duff's Maratha Bakhars Elphinstone's and Marshman's Histories of India besides the Iliad, the Ramayana, the Mahabharat Ancient Histories, such as those of Greece, Rome, Egypt, Assyria and Babylonia In concluding this, the most spirited part of his work, he grows very optimistic and at the same time prophetic¹

away There is no political unity amongst the inhabitants of this country the bonds of caste are many and the people are like the victims of a tiger (as helpless as when in the mouth of a tiger)

1 કોનુ મોડુ મેં જોયુ અગમા રગ રમે છે,

ઝછઝી ઝછઝી લોહી, લોકીયા સુન વરે છે p. 346

Whose (suspicious) face must I have seen in the morning as I feel
vigor running through my veins My blood is bounding (in my veins)
and struggles to peep out

દિવસ હતો છે રાત, ઘડી પાછો ફરી ઝગશે
તન મન ધન ચઝ તેહ, પરીધી વ્હાર નીકળ્યો
ફસરત ફરશે પુરુષ, નિરોગી પુટ ધરો વહુ
છીઓ લેમની સાય, હયા રહી છેશે સદુ

ચાઝ તમ નહિ યાય, સ્વયંવરથી પરનારો.
જાતિ ધનનો લુટે, પરસ્પર જમવું યારો.
જશે જન પરદેસ, નવુ ત્યાં જરૂને જોરો
આથી તે નીન દેસ, ધોમતો કરશે હોરો. p. 347.

As to the political salvation of India his views were very advanced. He was aware of the economic drain impoverishing the country as a result of foreign rule. He thought that in the long run after the political apprenticeship of the Indians was over and they had become sufficiently experienced, great political privileges would be granted to them by a benign and fair Government, and ultimately the Indians would rule their own country with a member of the Royal Family at their head, who would make India his home, just as the Mogals had done. Scott's famous lines

"Breathes there the man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land?"

touched a chord in his heart and he has translated and embodied them in a portion of his work, which is dedicated to patriotism or Pride in one's native country¹. Verses dedicated specially to Gujarat and its inhabitants are very affecting and while appealing to their glorious past open their eyes to their decadent

Once upon a time there was daylight, now there is night but again there will be daylight. The same strength of body and mind and wealth will appear once more. Men will take to exercise and thus become healthy and robust. Women will move about with them and all would enjoy fresh air. Child marriages will disappear and marriages by choice take their place. Caste distinctions will vanish and interdining succeed it. Then men will travel to foreign lands and observe new things there, and on their return adorn their own country with zeal.

¹ See pp 623 to 634. Scott's lines would be found at p. 625.

present and in feeling terms call upon them to exert their utmost in improving their condition ¹

1. His invocation to Gujarat beginning with जय जय गरवी गुजरात has become a rich heritage of the people and their literature. The opening stanza is

जय जय गरवी गुजरात,
जय जय गरवी गुजरात,
दीपे अरुण परमात,
ध्वज प्रकाशसे सज्जत्त कसुम्बी, प्रेम शीर्ये अकीत.
तु मणव मणव निज सन्तति सउने प्रेम भकिनी रीत.

Victory, Victory, to thee, O Glorious Gujarat,

Victory, Victory to thee, O Glorious Gujarat.

The rosy dawn puts forth her splendour,

Thy ruddy banner, inscribed with Love and Bravery, will (one day) wave in the sun. (Therefore) Teach, teach all your children the ways of love and devotion. Its closing stanza is :

ते अन्हिल्लाडना रंग
ते सिद्धराज जयसिंग
ते रंग षकी पग अधिक सरस रंग, यसे सत्यरे मात,
शुभ शकुन दीसे मध्याह्न सोमरो, पीती गइ छे रात,
जन घूमे नर्मदा साथ,
जय जय गरवी गुजरात.

PP 630-631.

The glory of Anhilwad and King Siddhra] Jayasing (were there in the past). But now, O Mother, soon will appear a glory eclipsing even that glory. Auspicious signs are visible. The night is over, and the noon day (Sun) will shine. People are marching with Narmada (shankar) : Victory, Victory to thee, O Glorious Gujarat.

Allied to this topic are his famous lines on Surat, which whenever read, send a thrill of joy and pride¹ through the heart of every native of the place. The rise and fall of Surat, once the Queen of Cities in Western India, the Gate of Mecca, the entrepôt of all European goods into the country where in her best days the flags of sixty-four nations flew traced by Narmadashankar with historical accuracy, along with his exhortation to the sons of Surat and especially to his own community, the Nagar Brahmins to shake off apathy and assist in the task of national regeneration wake an echo in the heart of every Surat-born individual. The verses are marred in some places by artificiality, where he cannot resist the temptation of playing upon the double meaning of the word Surat—which means both a city of that name and the human face, in this instance the face of his beloved, a woman's face. He introduces further artificiality by comparing the city to a woman. But on the whole they are one of the most spirited and affecting chronicles in verse of an ancient and historical city²

¹ See specially the lines beginning with

કટ્ટણ અમદાવાદ, બડાઈ કર તું તારી,
નાળાના છે તોર, લીધા નથી જલમો કારી. p 399.

where he deprecates Ahmedabad and calls her people yokels, exalting Surat, as the seat of inborn intelligence, intellect, taste and refinement. The lines mean, Unfeeling Ahmedabad, sing thine own praises as much as thou likest, thou hast the pride of wealth, but hast not borne deep wounds (like Surat). This sentiment is very flattering to men of Surat who still look down on the people of Ahmedabad, whom they consider misers.

² See pp. 394, et seqq. of the નર્મકાવેતા.

The first lines are :

આ તે શા તુજ હાલ, સુરત સોનાની મુરત
યથા પુરા વેદાલ, સુરત તુજ રહતી સુરત.

Devotional or religious (ईश्वर सवधी) poems also find a place in his collection,¹ including several²

Devotional or religious poems fashioned on the lines of Persian poetry with Persian words, written in deference to the feelings of the Parsi community from amongst which for a large number of years Narmadashankar received assistance, in the shape of sympathy, encouragement, money and the purchase of his books. These rhymes have no poetical

रे हसी हसीने रडी, च्हडी च्हडी पडी तु बाकी,
दीपी कुंदनमा जडी, पडी रे कथीरे झाखी

What a state is this of thine O Surat ! Thou, who art called Surat, art an image fashioned in gold. Thou hast been entirely ruined. Surat ! thy face has become melancholy. Oh, thou lovely one thou hast often laughed and wept often risen and fallen again. Thou, who didst sparkle once as a jewel set in gold, art now lustreless in a setting of base metal.

सुरत तारी शी सुरत, जनो क्याना ललचाव्या,
फिरगी ने अप्रेज, वलदा फ्रांसिस आव्या

Where, O Surat is the beauty that once attracted far off peoples, Portuguese English Dutch and French ?

सुरततण ओ तनुज, विशेषे नागरबच्चा.
अनावला काएच, तमे हटमा नहि कच्चा.
रुडी यातमा हट्ट राखशो रुडी रीते,
स्वार्थ अने परमार्थ साधि रहेशो सुखि नीते.

O Sons of Surat and more especially you Nagars Anavalas and Kayasths, you are not deficient in resolution. Resolve then to devote yourselves to your own and others' progress in true welfare and your happiness will be assured.

¹ See pp 522 to 602 Ibid

² pp. 601—602 Ibid

value, as they are merely a bringing together of Persian words, thrown into the form of a Persian *Bet* (couplet). The other poems shew his deep knowledge of the fundamentals of the Hindu religion and the Vedanta.¹ Lines composed at the time of his father Lalshankar's death (Pp. 582 to 585) give some idea of the way in which a Hindu derives consolation from the precepts of his religion at the death of a near relative.²

¹ The following are some of those which are well known.

(a) નદિ દરિયો મેદાન ને છે ગંભિર આકાશ,
દશ દિશ હાવા ધાય છે, શોક વીકનો વાસ.

P 579

River, ocean, plain, and the vast sky above, wherever one turns all point to the same mournful end. (Description of a burning ground.)

(b) નર્મદ આશરે ધૂલેધૂલ, શાને યાય બાકઘો ?
સાચું નિત્યનું અહિંયાં ન કાંઈ, અંતે સંધે છે સઘો. p. 581.

O Narmad ! in the end we shall all return to the dust. Why then should any one worry ? Nothing here is truly permanent. Decay is the fate of all.

² જ્ઞાની હોય મરી જાનાર, તપસ્વી ને સાધુ રે,
નીર ભઝ્જ પેરે રહ્યો હોય, જીવન્મુક્ત તે સરે. p. 584.

When one who has attained true knowledge comes to die, then if he has lived the life of an ascetic and a saint, like the lotus in the pond, in the world yet apart from it—, such a one is secure of deliverance—from further births.

He translated from the English three well known poems,
 Translations from English Wordsworth's *We Sareeven*¹ and *Lucy Gray*,²
 and Robert Southey's *Lord Nelson*.³ He
 essayed to write long narrative poems, basing
 them on love.⁴ There are two or three fragmentary poems
 which he meant to be epics.⁵

So far as solid work is concerned his verses in favour of
 Verses on Social reform Social Reform and eradication of social
 domestic evils and superstitions may be
 to have achieved some thing. Several of
 them attracted much notice at the time they were composed
 and even afterwards have proved useful to those who are
 engaged in the work of Social Reform.⁶

1 As *वनी*, p. 42 of the *नर्मकविता*

2 p 16, *ललिता*. „

3 p. 33. *साइस देसाइ*. „

4 (a) *वज्रसग ने चांदबा* (pp 240-263).

(b) *कुमुदचंद्र प्रेमपत्रिका* (pp. 354-394).

The heroine or main character being a young widow, daughter
 a King, in love with his minister's son whom she ultimately married

(c) *रुदन रसिक* (pp. 401-414) which is an unfinished piece

5 (a) *जीवराज* (pp. 416-419), (b) *वीरसिंह* (pp. 430-440); for this
 subject he has coined a certain metre resembling the English heroic
 metre and called it *वीरवृत्त* (the heroic metre).

6 E. G., the following on p 236.

सद्गु चलो जीतवा जग, म्युगलो दागे,
 या होम करान पदो फतेह छे आगे,

Many of his love poems (*પ્રીતિસંબધી*) which breathe more the spirit of carnal passion than of pure and ideal love were so much on the lips of young men of the seventies and eighties, who imagined themselves just as much love-stricken as he, that one was justified in apprehending that they would lead to the contamination of their morals. It is his work on this topic which has earned him the sobriquet of the Byron of Gujarat. Some of them contemplate guilty love, in addition to the meetings of the beloved and the lover on the sly. On the whole they are not at all adapted to the elevation of any one's morals. If anything, they are calculated to corrupt the minds of readers.

સાહસે કોલંબસ ગયો નવો દુનિયામા,
 સાહસે નેપોલ્યન મીટયો યુરપઆલામાં.

* * * * *

સાહસે જ્ઞાતિના વંધ, કાપિ કટ નાંચો,
 સાહમે જાઓ પરદેશ વ્હીક નવ રાણો.

* * * * *

Come along, all of you, march on to victory ; the bugles are sounding. Cheering, rush forward, and victory is sure.

It was courage (spirit of adventure) which took Columbus to the New World. It was courage which enabled Napoleon to march through the whole of Europe.

Cut off the bonds of caste with courage. Travel to foreign countries with courage. Be not afraid.

Further, see verses on the Success of Social Reform, p 774, and the exposure of the immoralities committed in secret by the Maharajas of the Vaishnava sect, pp. 775—777.

Narmadashankar's language lacked gracefulness. It had not the smoothness of Dalpatram, and in many places its artificiality lay on the surface. Vulgar words, and phrases used in common parlance are met with often. He seems to have taken no care to weed them out and has sometimes coined incorrect words¹ to meet the exigencies of rhyme and resorted to unsuitable similes or metaphors for the same purpose². Rao Bahadur Ramanbhar's estimate of his poetry seems more balanced and to the point than Navalram's. "The poetry of Narmadashankar is directed by his feelings and is concentrated upon his own self. But his imagination often runs dry, ceases to get help from emotion; and (hence) the spirit of novelty disappears from its भाव"³.

¹ See p 249, वजेसग ने चादवा,

एम विचार करी गयो, कचेरीमा ते व्हेल,
जोए तो को ना दीठू, पोते सौषी व्हेल.

here व्हेल is coined to rhyme with व्हेल, for व्हेलो (early). Or see p 349 अनुभवलहरी.

रे नर्मद आ वेळा तने, चंदी करता अंधी गमे.

here चंदी (moonlight) and अंधी (darkness) are both new words manufactured for the metre

² राम्होलमा महीना लगी, इतकी खूब कनकपी चगी. p 258

Indulgence in the sport of love has never before been compared to the flying of a diminutive paper kite (कनकपी). The simile is dragged in to embellish the description of a palace the terrace of which an inhabitant of Surat considers the best place for flying kites from

p 54. कविता अने साहित्य.

The few imitators who took pride in following in his footsteps have now disappeared ¹

Narmadashankar's best work for which our literature would remain ever obliged to him is his Dictionary. There was no such work before he published his નર્મકોશ or ગુજરાતી શબ્દાર્થ સમૂહ, at considerable cost in time (1860-1868) and unparalleled trouble. It has remained a model Dictionary ever since it was published in 1873. We are also indebted to him for a Mythological Dictionary—his નર્મકથાકોશ. It has supplied a want in the language. No one else has made an attempt in this direction either to improve upon his work or imitate him.

Amongst the followers of Kavi Narmadashankar, Kav Savitanarayan was able to leave some good work behind him. Vijayashankar and Rao Bahadur Madhuvachram Balvachbham Vora (the latter still amongst us) also imitated him ². Savitanarayan learnt Vraj from Hirachand. He was serving as a way inspector in the early sixties in the B B & C I Ry but so great was his passion for literature that he left off Railway service preferring private service in Bombay, so that he could live a stationary life and prosecute his studies. His સવિતાકૃત કવિતા (1867 and 1885) contains verses which are of the most ordinary type and follow the style of Narmadashankar. Here and there one comes across some vigor and outspokenness. His best work however is connected with Vraj and the annotated edition of Bihari Satsai and its introduction (1913) will for ever make

¹ Ibid, p 704.

² See p 137 સાઠીસ સાહિત્ય.

him rank as a scholar of Vraj, like Davaram. Another work of his called the *अलकारचंद्रिका* (1st Ed. 1878, 2nd Ed. 1910), is, though a technical work still very elaborate and an improvement on the *अलकारप्रवेश* of Kavi Narmadashankar. The whole subject of *अलकार* is scientifically treated by him. *अलकार* or figures of speech are of two kinds *शब्दालकार* and *अर्थालकार*. He has treated of the latter only in this book. His *नीतिमुधातरंगिणी* is a translation of a Hindi work and as its name implies contains stories on moral subjects.

Vijayashankar Keshavram Trivedi published his *Vijay Vani* in 1870. Many erotic verses in it won some distinction at the time.

Kavi Hirachand Kanji was a contemporary of Narmadashankar, and just as the latter prided himself on being more than a match for Dalpatram, this Kavi considered himself superior to Narmadashankar. He was a Dasa Shrimali Bania by caste and came originally from Morvi in Kathiawad. He was a great student of Vraj and Hindi and he was the first to collect and publish the poems of Akha. As Narmadashankar was the first to publish those of Dayaram. Like Narmadashankar he has also published a small lexicon. He was said to be a good painter and very fastidious in his tastes, always neat in person and dress. In his book *मिथ्याभिमानमालखंडन*, he has shown great contempt for the poetasters of his time, "By singing Oh, Oh, and Alas, Alas, every now and then," he asks, "can poetry be composed?"¹

1 अररेरे, हाय, हाय, ठेकाण ठेकाणे गाय,
एवी शु कविता घाय? * *

He further says pointing the finger of scorn straight at Narmadashankar— 'Narma (dashankar) does not know the inner meaning of poetry, he takes the help of disjointed phrases and gives new meanings to words ' ¹ As he proceeds further he ridicules one of his poems called *સલિલા*, where a father describes the beauty of his daughter in the language of a lover. As for three of his other works the *વિગલ્યપ્રવેશ*, the *અલકારપ્રવેશ*, and the *રસપ્રવેશ* he likens him to an owl and says that beautiful poetry cannot be manufactured by artificial means. Hirachand wrote many books of poetry which carried considerable importance in those days ²

- 1 સવદ અવદ્ધ નવા અરય વરથ સ્થાય
 વવિનો મરમ નચી જાણતો નરમ કવિ

2 His works are —

ગાયનશતક (Pts I II III IV 1863 65) A declamation in verse against old customs કુમારવોધ કુમારિકાવોધ નામાર્થવાધ 1864 This is a curious book. The author calls it an explanation of names given to men according to their natures મગી હજામ વગેરેના નામનો અર્થ તથા તેમના લક્ષણની કવિતા As an instance take જુગારીનું લક્ષણ (the trait of a gambler)

જીતે તે દીન મીર થે ડહાડી દે શોક,
હારે તે દીન ચોરી કા કરજ કરે ઘરી શોક

When he wins like a lord he (spends and) drives away sorrow When he loses he either steals or borrows and thus invites sorrow

ગુજરાતી અનેકાર્થ વોશ સુવરેલ શાસ્ત્ર. ગુજરાતની ગાડાઈ. ભાષામૂલ્ય (1866) Commentaries in Gujarati on a book on અલકાર શાસ્ત્ર by H H Jaswantsinhji the Maharana of Jodhpur. વૈરાગ્ય વોધ વિગલાદર્શ તથા નીતિ વોધ સર જમશેદજી લીજીમાઈની કવિતા માનમજરી તથા અનેકાર્થ મજરી, મુદરશુગાર તથા હીરાશુગાર,

Bholanath
Sarabhai

Rao Bahadur Bholanath Sarabhai (1823-1886) represents one of the best phases of the social Reform movement, and the transition in religious matters from the worship of the image to that of the Imageless One. He was born in one of the most orthodox though at the same time the most cultured and wealthy families of Ahmedabad. A Nagar Brahmin by caste it is no wonder if he excelled in Persian and Sanskrit. He knew English and Marathi. He had studied law and after serving Government in various positions of honour and trust he retired in 1874 from the very responsible post of a first class Sub-judge after thirty years service. Great credit is due to his power of reasoning and courage of conviction in that though surrounded on all sides by superstitious people and with a strain of orthodoxy in his blood, he gradually freed himself from the shackles of idol worship (his family deities being the goddess Amba and the god Shiva), and ultimately in conjunction with an equally ardent and sincere worker, Rao Saheb Mahapatram Rupram became the founder of the Prarthana Samaj (1871) which recognised prayer to God as the true method of worship.¹

काव्य कलाप अंक ९ काष्ठ्य ३७. लक्ष्मीसहस्र, विदग्धमुख खड्ग, सटीक. योग-
वाशिष्ठ, पुरयसूक्त सव्याख्या

1 The Prarthana Samajas of Bombay and Ahmedabad are virtually the same as the Brahmo Samaj of Calcutta in all respects excepting that the former institutions were not at their inception prepared to accept and inculcate the principle of the abolition of caste. Both these institutions preach Theism and they resemble the tenets of the Christian Church in so many ways that the followers of the Brahmo and Prarthana Samajas were at one time suspected of having become converts to Christianity. Bholanath was similarly suspected of having become a Christian.

The excellent diary kept by him, copious extracts from which have been given in his biography, published by one of his sons, shews how he passed from being an image worshipper to be a Prarthana Samajist, and how step by step, eradicated from his home, the many superstitious practices and social evils which were rampant in Ahmedabad as in other parts of Gujarat. His fame rests no doubt on the pedestal of social or rather religious reform to which his simplicity of life, blamelessness of character, high mindedness and nobleness of ideal contributed greatly. But what has enshrined his name in the history of the Gujarati Language and Literature is not what he has done in that direction, but his solid achievement in the realm of religious poetry as an exponent of the Bhakti of the One, Pure and holy God. Bholanath's reputation as a Bhakta Kavi (religious or devotional poet) stands by itself and is unassailable. Not that the element of religious devoutness was absent from the other literature of Gujarat. There was rather too much of it in its earlier phases, but the way in which Bholanath expounded the yearning of the human heart for some One to help it out of its ever recurring

The four cardinal principles of the Prarthana Samaj are thus laid down by its founders

(1) God is one. He is the Creator, Sustainer and Destroyer of the Universe. He is separate from things created. There is no other God but Him. He is Omniscient, Omnipresent, Omnipotent, Just, Merciful and Holy. He alone is worthy of worship.

(2) Devotion to God (भक्ति) is the true Religion.

(3) Faith inspired by Love, Service, Prayers in praise of God, good conduct, is (भक्ति) devotion.

(4) God is pleased by Bhakti and by Bhakti does the Soul benefit in this world and the next.

sufferings, is entirely different from the way in which the older votional poets approached this sacred subject. Miranbai or Dayaram wrote as if they were completely detached from the subject matter of their poems. They, as if standing aside, addressed their own mind and then gave some advice or taking Krishna in his lascivious moods as their ideal, poured out a stream of amorous prayers. Akha, in the same manner administered his whips to his audience or readers. Bholanāth, addressing himself to God only, placed before Him his own human weaknesses and invoked the assistance of that Fountain of Strength in vouchsafing him all the strength he needed in his devotion. His poetry is thus a series of prayers addressed to a Formless (Spiritual) God, the All-Merciful Creator of the Universe and its All-Powerful Upholder. He approaches Him as a child would approach his parent, and the burden of all his poems is the plaintive cry of a lost soul, who calls upon his father to lead him from Untruth unto Truth, from Darkness unto Light, from Death unto Life eternal. The orderliness in Nature, the immutable laws under which Nature worked, the preciseness and mathematical accuracy of the movements of heavenly bodies, impressed him deeply and throughout his two volumes of the Ishwar Prarthana Mala, this particular aspect of creation is most predominantly brought out.¹ Bholanath was very fond of and an expert in music and in all his verses his musical nature has asserted

¹ Eg, सर्वं वस्तुमा घटितं मुक्तयो छे,

गणितं नियमनो ताळोरे

In all (created) things, Thou hast put a suitable mathematical law.

itself and imparted to them a beauty and delicacy which have gone far in making them popular.¹

The two volumes of the Ishwar Prarthana Mala (a rosary of prayers to God), consist of songs, Padas, with one prose passage in each section (અંક). The work is divided into thirty sections each intended to serve for one day out of the thirty in a month. The prose passage in each section is couched in reverent language beseeching the Creator in very humble and feeling words to forget his weaknesses and grant strength to the devout and poor human being, to enable him to always keep Him and His behests in mind and behave accordingly. He prays to be given સદાચરણબલ, the strength of virtuous conduct. Bholanath's intimate knowledge of Sanskrit and of the Upanishads as well as of the Dharma Shastras has been usefully requisitioned by him in support of the devout sentiments that he

1 The following out of many others may be taken as specimens

- (a) દીનનો દયાલ છોડી કોને શરણ જાઉં,
માત તાત જાણી પ્રભુચરણ પ્રતે ધાઉં ?

From whom else should I seek protection except from the Merciful Helper of the humble ? Looking up to you as my father and mother I come running to your feet.

- (b) વિધાતા ધન્ય છે, તારી રચના જગતની અનંત,
શ્વતકર્મ અગોચર રૂપ તમારું,
ઘ્યાપી રચા સત્તા યકી ભગવંત,—વિધાતા.

O Creator, praise be unto you. Your creation of the Universe is unceasing. Your form can neither be perceived by the senses, nor imagined by the mind. O God ! Your rule is universal.

- (c) તારો રે દયાલ મને દીન ગણી તારો રે.

O Merciful (God), save me, save me, humble as I am.

utters Faith in God, in His divine mercy, the lowliness of the human being and his weaknesses these supply him with his theme He depicts the sentiments not of his own self but of any ordinary creature standing in the presence of his Creator and being reminded on the one hand of his infirmities and his sins and then his joy in having it revealed to him that God is all Merciful and Forgiving

“The heart is captivated by the beauty of the poetry, feels in reading it delight of a high order, and Its real worth side by side indirectly gets admonition. These are the marks of a real poet's work. The verses of this poet are saturated with the *रस* of devotional poetry. The heart of the poet overflows with devotion, is charmed by the beauties of the divine creation, and gives expression in their real form to the sentiments of devotion and love, at the same time he enchants the heart of his reader, leads it with him towards God, and makes it share in the divine element’¹

In spite of the frequent repetition of the same sentiments and ideas, Bholanath's poetry has acquired A unique position a unique position in Gujarati literature, and although isolated verses appear every now and then in monthlies and magazines, on the lines of Bholanath's work, till now he has neither been imitated successfully nor surpassed²

¹ P 149 of *સાઠીશુ સાહિત્ય*, where this extract is taken, without acknowledgment, from R B Ramanbhai's *કવિતા અને સાહિત્ય*.

² R. B Ramanbhai Nilkanth's review of Bholanath's life and his works at pp 64 164 of *કવિતા અને સાહિત્ય* is one of the best and enlightened guides to a thorough understanding of his work and the new era he created in religious poetry

He lost two of his sons in his lifetime. A third one who died after him has written commendable verses, while the remaining two who are still¹ in our midst have acquired a name in literature and possess great skill in the science and art of music.

So popular has been his Ishwar Prarthana Mala that during the course of about forty-four years it has run into six editions, and nearly ten thousand copies have been sold. Out of its thirty sections, the last two (29 and 30) were not written by him as he died after completing the twenty-eighth. They were composed by his son Narsinhrao with the exception of a few songs (૧૪)

The form in which the Prarthana Mala is cast is one of the causes of its popularity. In each section there are a few *જુદા*, a few songs (૧૪) which can be set to music, a prayer in classical prose and the verses which wind up the whole section are in the form of an Arati, a song in vogue with those who worship Shiva and Shakti.² The music of this song appeals both to the singer and the listener. Besides the effect of these verses whether recited in private or in a public gathering is very soothing. If the reciter by a little effort on his part, tries to forget his surroundings for the moment, wraps himself in the spirit of the song, and makes himself one with its

¹ Since this was written the younger of the remaining two sons has passed away (September 1921)

² Those who are worshippers of Shiva and Ganesh do not hesitate to chant these Aratis while worshipping their gods so beautifully have they been composed and so devoid of offence are they.

sentiments and emotions he feels at once the exhilaration of the devotee in the presence of his God, the calmness of one who has left behind him all the cares and anxieties of the world and the serenity of mind which comes from the consciousness of having expiated one's sins. Devoid of offence or aggressiveness towards other creeds, free from the fanaticism of the founder of a new faith, the whole series is so well composed that its sweet persuasiveness, which has assimilated the best portions of the higher and purer form of Hindu religion, has won the heart of every thoughtful reader. His poetry is simple, as simple as nature. There is no meretricious decoration, no artificial aid employed to make it attractive. He has adopted the *अभंग* and the *दिंडी*, a form of song as much in vogue with the religious literature of the Deccan, as the *Arati* in Gujarat.

Thakore Sahib Shri Sursinhji Takhtasinhji Gohel of
 Kalapi Lathi in Kathiawad, who wrote under the
 nom-de plume of Kalapi (a peacock), died
 young, at the age of twenty-five (A D 1874-1900). He has for
 this reason been compared to Keats. He is one of our rare
 prince-poets. As he lived so near our own time, it is comparatively easy to obtain details of his life, and he has lightened the task by the numerous letters he wrote to his friends describing the romantic and philosophic moods which moved him to write his poems. A mere outline of his life, his birth, education, marriage, travels, rule and death—can be given in a few sentences.¹ He was born in the ruling family of Lathi.²

¹ See a paper read at the Third Gujarati Sahitya Parishad held at Rajkot in 1909, by his friend Rupshankar Udayashanar Oza, on his literary life (साहित्यजीवन), where he compresses it into sixteen lines.

² This is a fourth class native state in Kathiawad.

he lost both his parents when a child. When nine years old he was sent to the Rajkumar College at Rajkot to study, where he stayed for nine years. He then left for a tour in India and Kashmir¹. Thereafter for three or four years he was allowed to prepare himself for the princely duties that would devolve on him as ruler of his state. In January 1895, he was placed on the Gadi and given full powers by Government. Five years after, he died.

This bare outline does not mention the most important incident in his life, an incident which coloured the whole of his literary work. At the age of sixteen he was married to two wives. One of them Rama was his favourite. In her train had come a little girl as her attendant, who while yet six or seven years of age caught his fancy. He took her in his charge and educated her. With the passing of time, his parental attitude towards her changed into a lover's and their secret meetings roused the suspicions of her mistress Rama a woman of an imperious nature². He loved Rama but he loved this girl whom he called Shobhana more. However, in order to see her settled in life, he chose a partner for her in her own caste and married her to him. Belonging to a low class³ this man was unable to respond to the finer feelings of a girl brought up in better surroundings and the prince smitten by her sad

¹ He has given a very entertaining account of his experiences in a thoughtful work called *Travels in Kashmir or a Vision of Paradise* (કારમીરમા પ્રવાસ અથવા સ્વર્ગનું દ્રશ્ય) With this book began his career as a writer.

² અલદ. Kalapi's letter to Manlal dated 6-11-97 at page 11 of Kalapi's *Kekarava*.

³ The Khavis, who are personal attendants of a prince's household.

plight, as well as by a passion he was unable to control took the risk of marrying her himself in the July of 1898. He knew that this marriage would destroy his domestic happiness, as Rama, unable to bear a rival under the same roof, would leave him taking her children with her. He knew that as a ruler he would suffer in the estimation of his people who would not respect a prince who had filched the wife of one of his subjects from him. He knew that possibly Government might interfere and it might lead to a crisis in the State. He also vaguely suspected personal violence (towards himself or her) at the hands of the girl's relatives. He felt that he was taking Shobhana, through "the blood of her relatives," and the "tears of Rama"¹. This incident, by no means uncommon in the life of a native prince, of marrying or treating as a mistress any maid servant in his household, is invested with the halo of a love romance by the young poet, in a poem called *Trinity of Hearts* (*हृदय त्रिपुटी*). It is replete with the effusions of a lover, struggling to keep his faith with his married wife, and at the same time feeling that life without the companionship of another woman would be worthless. Incidents, real and imaginary, and of such stuff as dreams are made of, are set out in the poem, which is after all the performance of a young man, on the threshold of life, wanting in worldly experience and living in a world of dreams.

He was well equipped for his task: he prepared himself, seriously for the literary life he wanted to lead. In the Rajkumar College he did not learn much: in fact he found the curriculum defective and its limits irksome. However after leaving College, he read much. his letters show that he

Deliberate
equipment for
literary life

¹ Pp 9 and 10 of his letter in *Kalapi's Keharava*.

applied himself in earnest to the study of English and Sanskrit, besides Gujarati. He seems to have learnt a little Urdu, just that little learning which is dangerous. In the two great languages, poetry and philosophy absorbed his attention. Plato, Emerson and Swedenborg were his favourite philosophers though he studied many others.¹ Shelley and Wordsworth similarly pleased him more than the other poets. So far as his mother tongue was concerned, he tells us in his letters that he had read almost everything old and new.

His prose works and poems bear out the above statements in his letters. His prose works,² specially where he writes about Swedenborg show his close touch with philosophy, Eastern as well as Western, and his poems also testify to his wide and varied reading.

Being fully alive to the Court intrigues which are so chronic a feature of all native states, and not finding himself built that way, he tried to keep himself aloof from them by cultivating

1 For instance Tennyson's Love and Death is beautifully translated in "પ્રેમ અને મૃત્યુ." The narrative of the old Wanderer of Wordsworth's Excursion is translated partially in "કુદરેલીયો The Hermit by Goldsmith is translated under the heading of "હાડીસાધુ."

Mr Hiralal M. Desai's article in East and West (July 1916)

2 His various articles in the two monthlies the Sudarshana and the Chandra and some unpublished dialogues as well as his autobiography, besides Travels in Kashmir and the ideas of Swedenborg about religion and a short novel (called Mala and Mudrika) are his prose works. His poems are collected in book form and published by his friend Mr M. R. Bhatt, is a himself a literary man of no mean order. He has named it Kalapi no Hekarava (the cry of the peacock). He has written a historical poem called Hamirji Gobel.

friendship with literary men in various parts of Gujarat. The late Prof. Manulal N. Dvivedi, B A , a philosophical writer of some fame, was one of the first friends to whom he opened out his heart in correspondence. The late Mr. Manushankar Ratnaji Bhatt, B A , himself a poet, was another. The late Mr. Govardhanram M Tripathi B A , LL B , was a third. One of Kalapi's pleasures in life was to correspond with such people and profit by an exchange of views with them.

As he grew older his inclination for a life of seclusion (he calls it *वैराग्य*)—seclusion such as could only be attained away from the haunts of men—grew in intensity, and it is thought that had his life been spared longer, he would have abdicated his Gadi and thrown himself keenly either into the work of social service, or retired into the solitude of the Himalayan jungles, which had fascinated him during his travels there.

His poems are written on various subjects, but love and philosophy predominate in them¹. One writer has called his poems "the Gītā of Love"². However there is more of passion in them than love. The form in which some of them are cast, and their subject matter, are responsible for lending this sort of colour to them. Love poems cast in the form of a Persian Gazal retailing the cruelties of an imaginary Beloved degenerate except in the hands of a genius, into mere drivel, where only the phy-

1 He says in one place to read about love brings me joy and tears..... "Philosophy gives me great happiness" *प्रेम वाचको ए आनंदो मे आसु लावे छे... . किलोसाफी ए मने गभीर सुख आपे छे.*

2 See p. 17 of the Fourth Gujarati Sahitya Parishad Report, in r. MIndulal Sevalal Dave's paper on Kalāpi.

ical aspect of Wasl (Union) and Judai (Bereavement) pre-
dominates. When he turns to Nature he is more successful.
Imbued with the right idea of poetry,¹ when he is contemplating
Nature we feel as if he were conversing with her.² His poems
are mostly subjective. Some are narrative.

1 लागणी विना नुं काव्य न बनेज नहि. It is not possible to call the
poetry which is devoid of feeling.

2 Not only do we find this fine sentiment in his poems but his
prose work *Travels in Kashmir*—is also full of such passages. "The
poem called 'कमलिनी' 'Kamalinī' or the Lotus is obviously written in
imitation of 'The Cloud' by Shelley" (Mr H M Desai in *East and West*
July 1916). Kamalinī, however, appears to be more a direct imitation
of Narsinhrao's चंद्रा (the Moon) which itself was written on the model
of *The Cloud* by Shelley. p. 24 of the *Heekaravā* is an instance in point,
specially this stanza

कुमुदी न्हानी बेनडी मुज, व्हाल चदापर धरे,
चदा जुळा करस्पर्श मृदुयी फेरवे मुखडापरे,
भगिनी मारी लाडकी ते जागती आखी निशा,
मुज पास जलशैयापरे निद्रा करे दिनमा सदा.

My little sister (the flower) Kumudī (white Lotus) loves the Moon
and the Moon with her soft and delicate hand strokes her face. My
darling sister keeps awake the whole night while during the day she
sleeps near me on her water bed.

The following lines from *To a Creeper* quoted in Mr R U Oza's
paper are also worthy of notice

हुमा तुमा अरर पण आ काई लूदुज भासे,
तहारा म्हारा पथ महीं दिसे भिन्नता एक उडी,
तु चाले छे सतत गतिए, बूदतो चालतो हु,
धक्का मारे कुदरत मने, दोरतो मात्र तुने

But alas! between you and me there appears to be this difference
here is this great variance between your path and mine. You move

Hamir Kavya which, its editor calls Hamirji Gohel, is a fragment, Kalapi wanted to try his pen on a historical subject and he selected an episode in the history of his house. It carries us back to

(grow) with a continuous motion. I move by leaps. My nature drives forward while you she merely leads.

The following prose passage from his *Travels in Kashmir* reads like poetry.

जेलम माताए सगात छोड्यो, अरे! तेणे एक मानी माफक श्रीनगरमा भने श्रीनगरयी कोहोला सुधी अमारा सभाळ लीधी तेना खोज्यमा अमने रमाव्या, तेना पयथी अमार पोषण कीधु, हालरडा गाई अमने आनद आप्यो, घुघरा वगाडी रीझव्या, नवनवी वस्तुओ दृष्टीआगळ धरी तृप्त कीधा, आखरे सीतानी माफक पृथ्वीमा समाई गई

Mother Jhelum left our company—Ah! She took care of us at Shrinagar and from Shrinagar to Kohola like a mother. She fondled us in her lap, nursed us with her milk, delighted us with her lullabies, pleased us with her rattle, gratified us by presenting always new things before our eyes and then at last disappeared under the Earth like Sita.

While leaving Kashmir he says

हवे ते स्वर्ग छोड्यु! हवे ते सुख खोयु! हवे ते आनद गयो! ते खुबी स्वप्नामाज जोवाना! ते पक्षीओना ते मधुर गीत तो हवे निद्रामाज काने पडशे! जेलम नदीनी ते गर्जना हवे स्वप्नामाज सभळाशे! स्वप्नामाज हवे ते डाल-लेक, तखे सुलेमान, ते बुलर लेक, ते नदी नाळां, ते फळफूल अने ते वनस्पति दर्शन देशे! रोंड तोषण शु!

Now I have left that paradise! Now I have lost that happiness! Now that joy has gone! We would see that beauty now in dreams only. We would now hear the lovely songs of those birds in sleep only! That roar of the Jhelum would now sound in dreams only. In dreams only would that Dhal lake, that Takht-e Suleman, that Woolar lake, those rivers and brooks, those fruits, flowers and verdure would appear now. I could weep, but what good would it do?

the times of the invasion of Somnath Patan by the Musalmans. A taunt from his brother's wife about his sitting at home while a new raid on Patan was threatened, decided Hamir to collect an army and meet the Mahomedans. En route, in order that his line should not become extinct, he married the daughter of a Bhil Chief, and then the Chief and Hamir both went forward to fight. Both were killed, but a posthumous son was born to Hamir's wife and he carried on the family traditions. The performance is poor prosaic and full of provincialisms ¹

Much is being made of the Gazals written by Kalapi. He knew their true function he calls them ^{Estimate of his Gazals} "outbursts of the heart." But his greatest drawback, as indeed that of almost all others, who have preceded or followed him has been ignorance of either Persian or Urdu, and first hand knowledge of the principles of Sufism. This has led them in the first place to misuse many Persian words, and in the next, to travesty the conceits of a Hafez and a Sa'adi, a Hali and a Nazir. These travesties have degenerated into worthless imitations where the original idea is hardly recognisable. The reader sees nothing but a collection of certain Persian words in the form of a Gazal ². In spite of all

¹ This use of provincialisms is one of Kalapi's characteristics. In the Hekarava many pure Kathiawadi words or provincialisms are found. See p 188 કોશિર p 440, શોફયુ, p 97 Hamir kavya વેનીલો

² Many instances can be given of the incorrect use of such words. p 205 Hekarava, અદલ કરવા કમલ કરવું, અદલ is wrongly used for "Justice" p 206 Ibid, નાદિ તડફુડે હે કા? તુ દે કાતિલ ક બોસા, Here કાતિલ (really meaning a killer) is wrongly used for cutting or "wounding" p 490, Hekarava, તાજી વની ત્યાં ત્યાં જડે વેલી શરાબી આપની. In Persian શરાબી means a drunkard. Here it is used to denote the exhilaration that comes from drinking wine.

these drawbacks, we find some creditable work from his pen, and many of the Gazals selected by the compiler of *Gazalistan* do arrest attention ¹

His feelings for birds and animals were keenly humane, he
felt attracted towards them, and his poems
His humanity on their life are not altogether devoid of senti-
ment ²

1 Specially the last Gazal आपनी याद, Your Remembrance has
by its smooth running periods become a favourite of many mouths

ज्या ज्या नज़र मारी छरे, यादी भरी त्या आपनी,
आगुमहोंए आखती यादी छरे छे आपनी

* * * *

रोउ न का ए राहमा बाकी रहीने एकलो ?
आशकोना राहनी जे राहदारी आपनी

* * * *

किस्मत करावे भूल ते भूलो करी नाखु बची,
छे आखरे तो एकली ते एज यादी आपनी.

Wherever my eye rests it finds the place full of your remembrances.
When tears trickle down my eyes they trickle your remembrances

* * * *

I am left alone on this road why should I not weep ? You are
the guide of that road of Lovers

* * * *

I will commit all those mistakes which Destiny makes me commit
But the last (mistake) will be only one and it will be the remembrance
of you

2 See p 232 of the *Kekarava* मने जोईने उडी जता पक्षीओने.
Also, p 441, शिकारिने,

सौंदर्यो बैडफी देता ना ना सुदरता मळे,
सौंदर्य पामता पदेला सौन्दर्य बनवु पडे.

Kalapi succeeds better when he writes pure Gujarati rather than mixed Gujarati (as in his Gazals), in which

His language there is an air of artificiality. Some of his lines which have become well known and are heard

from the lips of many are written in pure Gujarati, and will certainly live long.¹

He addresses the hunter and says,

No, No, You will not attain to beauty, if you destroy beauty. Before one attains the Beautiful, one has to become (the spirit of) Beauty.

¹ P. 210 Kekarava, વિધવાઝેન બાબાને, To widowed sister Bābān,

ઘાલી યાવા! સહન કરવું એ છે એક લ્હાણું,
માણ્યું તેનું સ્મરણ કરવું એ છે એક લ્હાણું.

સમ્બન્ધીના મરણ પછી ના સર્વ સમ્બન્ધ તૂટે.

છે ધૈધ્યે વધુ વિમલતા ઝહેન સૌમાગ્યથી કંઈ?
છે મક્તિમાં વધુ વિમલતા ઝહેન શ્રુગારથી કંઈ?

Dear Baban, to suffer is also a privilege (a sweetness). It is a privilege as well to remember past enjoyments. ("A sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things"). All ties with a relative are not snapped after death. O sister, in widowhood there is more purity than in the wedded life. O sister, in devotion to God there is greater purity than in love.

A writer¹ has compared Kalapi to Shelley calling them both poets of despondency. The article is useful in shewing the standpoint from which many of Kalapi's extreme admirers view his poems.

An admirer of Kalapi, his *nom de-plume* being Sagar, has reviewed his *Kekarava* in a separate book, *કલાપી અને તેની કવિતા*.

Perhaps this would be a convenient place to notice the commendable attempts made by many of the later poets to impress upon Gujarati verse, the style and spirit of Persian and Urdu Gazals. Of nearly sixty five such writers², besides

Poor quality of Gujarati Gazals Kalapi, Manilal, Balashankar, Amrat Keshav Nayak, Govardhanram M. Tripathi and Dahyabhai P. Derasari have produced commendable work. Balashankar knew Persian and Amrat Nayak

¹ Mr. Hiralal M. Desai B.A., in the July (1916) issue of "East and West". The reader may form his own impressions of this admiration on reading the following involved passage from the pen of Mr. Desai, writing about Kalapi's poem called *Kamalini*. "The Cloud gives an autobiographical description and *Kamalini* does the same. The lovely scenery of a quiet dreamland rendered more lovely by the picturesque style of Kalapi's versification the floating and dancing of *Kamalini* on the silvery sheet of the lake with gentle whispers of the wind the chiaroscuroic descriptions of Sunset and Moonlight, on the pictorial landscape are so exquisitely depicted by Kalapi that a lover of nature cannot but always dream of the charming scene and experience the attuning with infinity. The floating whisper of Nature on the wide expanse of the placid lake, where *Kamalini* indicating joy kissed so often was sufficient to instil a spirit of God's mystical creation in a silent onlooker.

² The number is taken from a collection of Gazals (in Gujarati) published by Mr. Jagannath D. Tripathi under the name of Sagar and called "the Gazalistan".

was familiar with Urdu. The knowledge of others about the forms and subject matter of a Gazal was second hand and hence in spite of their having written good poetry in one who is familiar with the original language and literature a feeling of dissatisfaction with the work comes uppermost at much that is incorrect in the use of words in the borrowing of sentiments in the pose of the characters.

Prof. Manulal Nabhubhai Dvivedi B.A. (A.D. 1858-1898) was a Sâthodara Nagar Brahmin of Nadiad. A successful student of the Elphinstone College he entered the Educational Department and served as a Deputy Educational Inspector of Gujarati Schools in Bombay. Later he was appointed Professor of Sanskrit at the Samaldas College, Bhavnagar, from where after a brilliant career as teacher he was compelled to retire on account of an incurable disease which affected his nose and

which rendered intelligible articulation impossible. He thereafter devoted himself entirely to literature leaning more towards Vedanta on which subject his books have won him some reputation. Domestic troubles prevented him from looking forward to a happy home and he led a free and easy life—spruce and tasteful in dress one always found him equally neat in his writings. Towards the end of his life H. H. the Gaekwad of Baroda ever ready to assist the cause of literature had entrusted him with a very congenial but at the same time valuable task viz. the inspection and cataloguing of the books lying in the Jain Bhandars at Patan, the best and richest Bhandars in India. Before he could finish this work he died.

His pen has undoubtedly enriched modern Gujarati literature His dramas and his prose writings will

His poems be noticed hereafter He has written little philosophic poetry comparatively, and that too mostly in the Vedantic vein, like Akha but unlike him

he has allegorised Vairāgya (Retirement from the World), and made it turn on Love, instead of turning away from it. The collection of his poems, called *આત્મનિમજ્જન* (1895), distinctly shews two influences at work within him He divides the work into *પ્રેમજીવન* (Life of Love) and *અનેદોર્નિ* (Waves of Monism)

It is the poems in the *પ્રેમજીવન* which are couched in the Sufistic style and called *Gazals* The *પ્રેમ* of these poems is sought to be explained just as the Sufi phraseology of the Persian poets is sought to be explained by referring *Ishk* (love) to the Love of God and not carnal love¹

In his preface he explains how his poems illustrate “the diving of the human being deep down into the Ocean of his Soul and bringing up of various kinds of gems from beneath it”. Manilal's best *Gazal*², the last production of his pen, has become very popular

1 p 138 footnote of *સાંતીનું સહિત્ય*, where the writer says that when the *Gazal દુગરસખર મોરે દિલ છાડ રહી* was written Manilal had not entered upon his course of Vedantic studies and hence the sentiment in it could not but be that of earthly love

² *કહોં લાખો નિરાશામા અમર આશા છુપાઈ છે !*

ખફા ખંજર સનમનામા રહમ હડી લપાઈ છે !

નુદાઈ ક્ષિન્દગીમરની કરી રો રો વધી બહાલી,

રહી ગઈ વસ્ત્રની આશા, અગર મરદન કપાઈ છે

- ઘડી ના વસ્ત્રની આવી, સનમ પળ છેતરી ચાલી,
 દજારો રાત વાતોમા ગમાવી એ કમાઈ છે. ૩
 શસ્ત્રમ દુનીઆ શબાનોના, મુસીવત સ્વોફના સજર,
 કતલમા એ કદમબોસી, ઉપર કયામત સુદાઈ છે. ૪
 શમા પર નાય પરવાના, મરે શીરી ઉપર ફરહાદ,
 અગમ ગમની શરાબીમા, મશ્વેદારી લૂટાઈ છે ૫
 પના કરચુ પના યાવુ, પનામાં રાહ સમાઈ છે,
 મરીને જીવવાનો મન્ત્ર, દિલચરની દુહાઈ છે. ૬
 શહરનુ નામ લે શોધી, તુરત પી લે સુશીથી તુ,
 સનમના હાથની છેત્રી, હકીકતની રફાઈ છે ૭
 સદા દિલના તડપવામા સનમની રાહ રોશન છે,
 તડપતે તૂટતા અન્દર, ઘડી માશૂક સાઈ છે ૮
 ચમનમા આવીને ડમો, ગુલોપર આફરીન થઈ તુ
 ગુલોના ચારચી બચતા, બદન ગુલને નવાઈ છે ૯
 હજારો ઓલીયા મુશિદ ગયા માશૂકમા ઢૂલી,
 ન ઢૂલ્યા તે મુવા, એવી વલામો સમ્પત ગાઈ છે ૧૦

Everlasting Hope is concealed in (the) numberless disappointmen
 (which is man's lot in this world) Mercy is concealed deep down :
 the angry dagger of Love (the Beloved) (Our) Lifelong bereavemen
 have I passed wholly in weeping and shedding tears Even thoug
 my throat is cut, yearning for union lingers still The moment f
 union did not arrive and the Beloved went away deceiving (me) t
 only benefit (I) derived is that I wasted thousands of nights in me
 talk. The slandering tongue of the world inflicts its wounds t
 word of fear (hanging over the head) causes anxiety, even if she k
 me, I kiss her feet, the Judgment of God rests above. The mot
 dashes against the candle (light) Farhad sacrifices himself f
 Shurin; in the run due to the Incomprehensible and the Con
 prehensible, pleasure has been stolen from us To annihilate and to t

As to the trend of the poem Manilal's friend and admirer, Professor A. B. Dhruva has rightly observed¹ Estimate of his poems of that it portrays in general terms his belief that the knowledge of Vedanta is not a barren exercise of one's intelligence but a pleasurable self sacrifice. This sacrifice is not like the give and take of a trader, but a renunciation of self from unselfish motives and that a faint manifestation of such a renunciation can be seen in the free unrestrained Love of man and woman. But the execution when closely examined falls far short of the test of even ordinarily good poetry. There is a misuse of words,² there is a hopeless confusion in expression³, there is a banal, prosaic use of nonclassical phrases.⁴ Beyond a certain lift due to the

annihilated in annihilation is comprised sovereignty. The Secret of Life in Death is the blessing (proclamation) of Love (the Beloved). Search for the proper kind of poison and take it willingly forthwith. [I do not comprehend this line] The well known highway to (the abode of) Love (the Beloved) lies in the perpetual pining of the heart. As soon as it snaps you will find the Beloved inside, standing like a saint. You have come into the garden fascinated by its flowers. It is a surprise for the rosebodied (being) to be spared the thorns of the roses. Thousands of saints and preceptors have lost themselves in Love (the Beloved). It has been proclaimed loudly that those who did not love themselves thus were considered dead.

1 p. 268 of the *Gazalistan*.

* See Thakkar Narayan Visanji's article in the Diwali Issue of the *Gujarati* for 1910, p. 69 where he has collected many such errors. E. G., *वक्रावसर* is incorrect and meaningless *बदनगुल* is wrong it should be the other way *गुलबदन* the use of *कलाम* (words) in the feminine gender is ungrammatical.

3 The fourth and the seventh stanzas for instance are obscure and it is difficult to translate them.

4 E. G., रात बातोमां गमादी ए वमाई ऐ.

arrangement of words which pleases the ear, there is very little of intelligible thought in it. But in spite of such defects his Gazals have "caught on."

Balashankar Ullāsram Kanthāria (A. D. 1859-1898), like

Manilal, hailed from Nadiad. He too was

Balashankar
and sterling
worth of his
Gazals

devoted to literature and edited several maga-

zines.¹ He had studied Persian and like Hafez

knew at first hand the pleasures of the Maya

Khanch.² Hence he is generally called मस्त

(the intoxicated). He had the commendable desire of reproducing the Gazals of that renowned Persian poet into Gujarati and, in fact, has translated some. He had also commenced the translation of the Persian histories of Gujarat into Gujarati. His Poems the हरिप्रेमपञ्चरी and the ह्यान्तकवि³ are vigorous, fresh and sweet. The several Gazals in the former have a peculiar swing in them and an outlandish defiance of the conventionalities of society, which place them on a par with those of Hafez and Saadi, who loved to be known as "rakes," as "outlaws against society." If a vivid impression of the Sufistic branch of the poetry of Persia and Upper India could possibly be conveyed through the vernacular of Gujarat, then the verses of Balashankar go a long way to do so. With a view to illustrate this statement, some of his best Gazals are given below, there is very little padding of Persian words in them, as is the case with his less learned imitators,

¹ भारतीभूषण, कृष्णमहादेव, बुद्धिप्रकाश.

² The Sufi's Tavern.

³ Published by Anantlal Madhavji Dave (1907)

which shows that these very sentiments can be conveyed in good, simple Gujarati !

- ¹ (a) बलिहारी तारा अगनी, चवेलीमा दीठी नहि,
सख्ताई तारा दिलनी, में बज्रमा दीठी नहि.
मन माहुर एवुं कुळु, पुण प्रहार सहे नहि,
पण हाय ! तारे दिल दया में तो जरा दीठी नहि.
एक दिन ते अलकावलीमां, दीठीती मुखनी छवी,
पण गुम थई गई ते गुमानी, तयारथी दीठी नहि.
ए कंई जरा कर शोच के, मारी उपर शाने गुमान
में देह अप्यो तोय पण, दिलदारने दीठी नहि.

You surpass the *Ohameli* flower in exquisiteness of form, (but) your heart is harder than adamant. My heart is so tender that it cannot bear a blow from a flower, whilst your heart is quite devoid of feeling. The time was when your face appeared to me a picture framed in your luxuriant tresses. Now that beautiful vision has gone from my sight. Tell me then, why do you scorn me now, me who has given my life to you, yet can get no glimpse of you.

- (b) दिलदारना दर्शन विना, बीजु मने गमतु नथी,
पुतळी पडे नजदीकमां चेठा विना गमतु नथी.

I like nothing else than seeing (the face of) my Beloved. I like nothing else than sitting beside her, to look at her as my idol.

- (c) फट मूर्खनी मूर्खांने, हु बखाण झांझुं शुं करूं,
दिलदग्धने दंभी कहे, ते दुःखने हुं झुं करूं ?
अमे प्रेमपंथी जोगीडा, अनुरागवागमहों वस्या,
धुति शौर मूक्या पाय, पछी विवेकने हुं शुं करूं ?

Fit on the idocy of idiots, what praise should I bestow on them ? They call him a hypocrite whose heart is aflame, how can I bear that

He has translated some odes of Hafez, but they bear no comparison with the original. ¹

Translation
of odes of Hafez

misery ? We are pilgrims on the path of love dwellers in the garden of delight We have trampled the scriptures under our feet What then have we to do with propriety ?

(d) જીગરનો યાર જુદો તો, બધો સસાર જુદો છે,
બધા સસારથી એ યાર, વેદરકાર જુદો છે
અરે શૂ જાણશે લક્ષ્મત, પવિત્રીમા પડી રહેતા,
પ્રિયાની પ્યાલીની મસ્તી, તળો વડે બહાર જુદો છે

If the loved one is unkind the whole world is unkind This friend of mine does not care for me and so the world is estranged from me What do the pious know of love's delight ? There is nothing to compare with the intoxicating draught from this cup of the loved one

(e) ગુજારે જે શિરે તારે જગતનો નાથ તે સ્હેજે,
મળ્યું જે પ્યાર પ્યારાએ, પૂરું પ્યારું મળી લેજે

કચેરીમાહી કાજીનો નથી હિસાબ કોડીનો,
જગત કાજી બનીને તું વહેરી ના ધિઢા લેજે

Bear whatever suffering the Lord of the world sends to you (on your head) Whatever pleases the loved one you must make that please you

In the Court the Kazi (Judge) does not count for a farthing you should not therefore instal yourself as the Kazi of the world and invite troubles

¹ Hafez's celebrated *Gazal* where he gives away both Samarkand and Bokhara for the black mole on the cheek of his Beloved, is thus translated by him.

Govardhanram Maghavram Tripathi B A , LL B , (1855-1907) belonged to Nadiad and was a Nagar Brahmin by caste. A student all his life in the teeth of adversities and vicissitudes due to the failure of his father's banking firm in Bombay, he held firmly to two resolutions, never to accept permanent service (private or Government), and in case of having to take up an independent profession like that of a lawyer, not to be a lifelong slave to it, but after securing a decent competence, to retire and devote himself to literature. Adherence to these two ideals cost him much. He refused tempting offers of permanent service, he threw up a most lucrative practice on the Appellate Side of the Bombay High Court, the reward of assiduity, honesty and legal acumen, when in his opinion the time had come to do so (October 1898), and devoted himself, unfettered by any professional calls, heart and soul, to literature. Very few instances can be quoted of Indian lawyers

अगर ते यार शीराझी, महार मन मेळाव,
समर्पुं हु बुखारा ने समर, तिलश्यामने भावे,
साखा
पूरेपूरो देई दे, साकी मदिरा सार,
सरिता रुक्नाबादनो, निर्मल शीत किनार,
लता मंदिर मुसझाना, कदो क्या स्वर्गमा लावे ?

His son, T B Kantharia has also formed the ambitious resolution of translating the whole of the Divan e Hafez into Gujarati and is contributing the same to the सुदर्शन monthly. A specimen of such a translated ode is given at page 157 of the Gazalistan. Balashankar's श्रांतकवि (the tired poet) is a poem of a hundred stanzas describing the poet's sad state of mind on account of the loss of his Beloved. Like his other work it is full of vigour and pathos. He is responsible for some translations from Sanskrit also. The Mrichha Katika, The Karpūra Manjarī and the Saundarya Laharī. In the preface to the last poem, he has warned the critics from touching his verses.

retiring in the heyday of their practice to devote themselves to so unremunerative a calling as literature. Even while practising as a *Vakil*, whatever leisure he could get he utilised in reading and writing, and much of his best work, the novel *Sarasvatichandra*, was written at this period. He is not known much as a poet, but whatever he has written is based on a high philosophical standard. Besides his poems which he calls *स्नेहमुद्रा*¹ he has written some fine verses to

¹ *स्नेहमुद्रा* has been recognised by the Educational Department as a text book. Though on the whole extremely difficult and in places more philosophic and argumentative than poetic, it has still got gems of thought embedded in it. His conception of a wife's duty towards her husband is very high. His heroine in this poem is full of patriotism and philanthropy. She is aware of a wife's power over her husband. She can excite or pacify him. In his turn, the husband is bound to satisfy the desires, or aspirations of his consort if they are improper then he has to convince her of the same, through her intellect (बुद्धि). Inspired by such ideas, the couple when travelling in India happen to come across a young woman, prepared to immolate herself on the funeral pile of her dead husband like the young widow in *Dalpatram's Vena Charitra*, and the unfamiliar, cruel scene upset them. At the risk of his life, the husband rescued the victim from the clutches of the people gathered to witness her death, whose idea of *स्नेह* or connubial love was the immolation of a wife on the burning pyre of her dead husband. He insisted on hearing from the victim's own lips the story of her life and contemplated sacrifice and said that if after living in peace with him for some days, she of her own free will came to the decision to sacrifice herself then he would allow her to do as she liked. He thereupon brought the girl back to consciousness and the story she told was one of pathetic interest, disclosing all the weaknesses of the Hindu system of marriage and the miseries of a loveless, lifelong connexion.

परदेशी सज्जन ! हिंदुઓ શાલેજ જીવન કલેશમાં,
નરજાત સુઘી દશે અહીં કરી મ્દાલતી સ્વચ્છન્દયી,
પણ નારીને રોવા વિના નહિ કર્મમાં બીજું કંઈ.

illustrate his thoughts, in his novel. Some of these are known as Gazals, put into the mouth of his

“Good Foreigner, Hindus pass their whole lives in misery. Perhaps the men, in this country living as they please, are happy, but the fate of the woman is nothing but tears” She said she was the daughter of a cultured father and was herself educated, imbibing high notions about mutual love in married life, which could come only from community of thought and taste between husband and wife

तम पास भगता हु भणी, मन जोडवा विधि हाथमा,

रस ऐक्य विण मन ऐक्य नहि, ए सून शिखव्युं ते दिने,

मन ऐक्य विण नहि मित्रता, प्रभवे गुरुजी, को रीते,

स्त्री पुरुष केरुं लग्न एवी मित्रतानो हेतु छे. स्नेहमुद्रा P. 32

“While learning from you I learnt that it is only fate that can join two hearts

There is no community of hearts unless there is community of tastes, this maxim you taught me then, and you also taught me that friendship cannot arise where there is no community of hearts, (and that the object of the marriage of man and woman is such friendship).” In spite of such teaching, the father gave her away without consulting her wishes and when taxed with inconsistency, pleaded the usages of his community as his excuse. Entreating her to obey his wishes he took his conduct so much to heart that he died. The girl then went to her husband and in religiously carrying out her father's wishes tried to make him as happy as possible. “Our lives became one, but not our hearts, because my aspirations were of one kind, those of my husband of another” (p. 35). Like an obedient Hindu wife, however, she obeyed destiny and made the best of her married life, but even that did not last long and her husband died. The foreigner's wife was greatly affected with the cruelty of the situation and exclaimed,

आर्य एने कोण कहे, अनार्य लोक ए,

कर्म काळुं, -मुख काळुं, हिन्दु हिन्दु ए—

स्नेहमुद्रा, P 41.

hero. Others are dedicatory verses to his uncle and sister. The latter specially are full of pathos and the affection of a

• Who will call them Aryas (civilized) ?
They are savages . their deeds are black, their faces are black.
These Hindus are black "

The girl ultimately died. This narrative poem is comparatively the simplest of the whole collection and can be matched only by several other poems (sixteen in number) which he wrote in memory of his eldest daughter Lilavati, whose case was parallel to the girl in the above story, with this difference that she predeceased her husband Lilavati Jivana Kala is one of the model biographies of a young Hindu wife and is typical of the lives of all her sisters Everything that is good in a Hindu woman is here set forth in poetic form

ધીમી ધીમી ચાલી તુ અદિચી કરતી કર્તવ્ય કામ,

તપ તપી મુજ ગુણીયલનુ ન પામી તુ ઇનો ફલ સયોગ,
રેખ લલ્યો મ્હેં, સફલ ક્યોં ત્હેં, દર્દ દુઘાતે ભોગઃ ધીમી ધીમી :
લીલાવતી જીવનકલા.

"Slowly, slowly you moved away from here discharging your proper duties :

You led a life as austere as that of my Gunial (a model wife in his novel, Sarasvatichandra), but did not get its reward as she did. I wrote the book, and you realised its incidents illustrating them by the sacrifice of your life "

Govardhanram has dedicated three poems to the memory of three different persons all near to his heart, his first wife, his uncle Mansukhrām and his sister Samarth Lakshmi The last is one of the most beautiful instances of a brother's love for his sister She died when she was thirty two, without seeing the completion of his great novel, in the development of which she was intensely interested, herself being a gifted lady and able to appreciate the value of her brother's work.

His translation of "The Hermit " and (a part of) Goldsmith's Traveller are well done

living brother for a deceased sister. The verses written by him at the time of the death of his eldest daughter breathe a spirit of sweet resignation, which would assuage the distressed feelings of any reader in the same state of mind as himself—a father losing an affectionate child.

More popular, however, than any of his other verses are those which are found in his *Novel*, the most popular being the lines of selfreproach which are put in the mouth of his hero.¹

1 दीधा छोडी पीता माता, तर्जा बहाली गुणी दारा,
गण्या ना मर्म भेदाता, लीघो सन्यास ए भ्राता.

* * * *

अहो ओ जीव माहारा रे, दर्द आ दश दाराने,
घटे ना भोग-संसार, घटे ना शांत सन्यास.

* * * *

हवे स्वच्छन्दचारी हु। यदृच्छावेशधारी हु।
पतंगो उडती जेथी— हवे मारी गती तेथी.

* * * *

जहागीरी फकीरी ए, ललाटे छे लखाधी म्हें,
प्रजाए हु, नृपाले हु, उरे ओ एकली तु तुं।

Father and mother have I left; and have deserted my loved and virtuous bride. I did not mind the wrench but chose this ascetic life, my brother.

O my soul after thus playing false to your beloved, you deserve neither the enjoyments of the world nor the quiet of retirement.

Now can I act as I will now can I dress as I like; my movements are like those of paper kites.

This royalty, this beggary—call it what you will, is my destiny, myself am subject, myself am king yet in my heart art thou alone.

Keshav Amrat Naik (1877-1907) was born in a community whose hereditary profession was acting. His caste people are known as *સરગાઢા* and he attained to some name as an actor in certain Bombay theatres. Although in common with his other castemen he laboured under the disadvantage of illiteracy and in his practice as an actor he had to make much use of Urdu it was highly creditable to him that he studied his own mother tongue to such advantage and that too amid the squalid and discouraging associations of a Bombay theatrical life—that he was able to leave behind him writings¹ which entitle him to a place amongst Gujarati authors.

¹ (a) भारत दुर्देश नाटक अने प्रकीर्ण लेखो तथा काव्योनी संग्रह, एम. ए. वनाके कथु मेरी मीथी खराब की ?

(b) As an illustration of the Gazals written by him the following couplets are quoted. They are faultless in thought and execution.

जिगरनो दाग नूनो छे, निराशानो नमूनो छे,
 सङ्ग ससार सुनो छे, उजड़ आशक तणु पर छे
 तमे धनवान छो तो, मुजसमा लाखो भीखारी छे,
 कमाई रुपनीमा आशकोनो लाग ने कर छे
 हृदय चाहे सदा लेने, दया आवे नहि तेने,
 यव्यु ए जीववु, एना यकी मरवुन बेहतर छे

* * * *

P 70 Gujarati D. wali Issue 30th October 1910. *Gazalistan*, p. 83

The brand on my heart is old it is a symbol of disappointment. The whole world appears empty to me. The house of the lover is desolate. If you are wealthy then there are millions of beggars like me. There is a duty and a tax due to lovers on the income of Beauty. The person whom my heart always loves takes no pity on me. Fie on this life, it is better to die than to live thus.

The Bulbul (1882) or Nightingale a monologue, a lyric of love, is a poem which is unique in the Gujarati language every line in it transports the reader to all that is best in the love-literature of Persia in it imagination runs riot and the effusions of a lover watching and wooing a wayward Beloved prove so infectious that young men are in danger of being carried off their feet on reading the Gazals The form of the poem, a felicitous blending of the સાચી and the Gazal invests this fine expression of a lover's lament, with an irresistible charm reminding one of Dayaram's Garbis (songs) Mr Dahyabhai P. Derasari Bar at law the author of this short lyric, has written much else,¹ but his name will live on account of his Bulbul² The passion of a voluptuary might at the first sight

1 He has edited an old Gujarati historical poem, called the કહાનકદેવવધ He has also written a short poem called the હરિધર્મશતક Besides this he has contributed to various other literary ventures pp 157 and 175 સાચીનું સાહિત્ય A list of his works on Science and other subjects is given on p 167 of the સચિત્ર સાહ્યરમાળા (Illustrated biographies of Gujarati writers)

2 For instance these lines which invest his Beloved with the omnipresence of God

સાચી

સુખ સૃષ્ટિમા તુજવિશે, તુ સદ્ગુણ મહાર,
નિર્મલ તેહનું ચપ તું, માટે પ્રભુ અવતાર
રહે કદી દૂર પળ પાસે, જળાયે તુ વધે વાસે,
પૂરી રહી નાર મ્ ભાસે, વધે તુ તુ છત્રીલી દા

સાચી

જોડ તને આવાશમા, મુમા ધુમાં તુય,
દશ દિશમાહી તુ મરી, તુજવિણ છે કહે શુય ?

seem to have prompted these verses, so full of burning words are they, but behind them lies the true expression of a poet's feeling¹

In the whole world my happiness lies in thee thou art a treasure house of all the virtues thou art the embodiment of pure love and hence an incarnation of God Even if living at a distance thou art near Thou appearest in all places This woman seems to have filled all space thou art everywhere O Beautiful one! I see thee in the sky, thou art on the earth and in the stars All the ten directions are full of thee. Tell me what is there without thee?

સાક્ષી

તો કે આ દિલ માહર, હોય થણુ સાલ,
પ્રેમભજન ભૂલે નહિ, પ્રેમ પ્રેમ કહે રાલ.

સરે મુજ સાલ કહેવાની, રહુ તુજ નામ દેવાની,
હૃદયમા આશ રહેવાની, “યઈ રહુ પ્રેમનો વદો ”

Even if this heart of mine were burnt to ashes it will not forget its hymn of Love Even my ashes would cry out love, love ' Indeed, my ashes will cry out and go on reciting your beautiful name My heart would always be yearning to become a slave of love

સાક્ષી

અર્ધ નિશાકરચી રહુ, પ્યારી તુજ કાલ,
મગઝસમ મહીં શોમતો, ગોઝાદલો લાલ.

વિસરી થાકી અને કાઢી, લલિત છટ શોમતી થાલી,
અટકી માલેજ રપાઢી, અરે, જા, શુ હસેડે છે.

O my Beloved, your forehead is more beautiful than the crescent moon On it the circular red mark shines like the planet Mars A beautiful tress of loose hair curly and dark, graces your head It is resting on your forehead, fie, fie, why do you disturb it?

¹ For an able review of the Bulbul see Ramanbhai's કારિતા અને સાહિત્ય, quoted at p 157 of સાટીનુ સાહિત્ય

Harilal Harshadrai Dhruva, B A , LL B , (1856-1896)
 was a Sathodra Nagar by caste. He served
 the Baroda State as a Judge and in 1889 was
 deputed to represent it at the Stockholm
 Congress of Orientalists. He read several
 papers there, one of them being on Indian Geometry.
 His study of the Sanskrit and Prakrit languages
 was recognised on all hands as noteworthy, and he
 was given the degrees of Ph D , and Lit D , in Europe.
 He took great interest in old copper plate and
 stone inscriptions, and greatly helped antiquarian re-
 search in Gujarat. From his boyhood he was interested in
 literary pursuits and his literary activity lasted till his death.
 He founded a monthly called the "Nagar Udaya" (1880)
 and an Association in Surat, called the Praja Hita Vardhaka
 Sabha ((1882), which discussed political and social topics.
 He also edited a literary monthly—the
 Chandra (Moon)—which attained consider-
 able popularity, specially as it encouraged
 new writers by publishing the fruits of their first
 efforts. He is chiefly remembered in Gujarati literature
 as one of the pioneers of the modern school of poetry¹

1 Burns Tennyson Shelley Wordsworth these were some of the
 English poets that inspired the *alumni* of the University and laid the
 foundation of the new school. Here is a translation by Harilal of some
 famous lines of Burns

Had we never loved so blindly
 Had we never loved so kindly
 Had we never met nor parted,
 We had ne er been broken hearted

ना होत स्निग्ध नयनो निरख्या कदापि,
 बोल्या न होत प्रयमेयी मुखे तथापि,

rather than for his antiquarian or research work. The latter, although nothing more than spade work, was more valuable than many of his verses which were shallow and extravagant.¹

Some of his works are the Aryotkarsha, the Vikramodaya (dramas), The Purva Megha, (a translation of the Meghaduta), Kaumudi Madhava (1876, a poem included in the Kunja Vihar), the Vasanta Vilasika and the Kunja Vihara (1896, poems), the Pravas Pushpanjali (a posthumous publication brought out by his son, Sumanas, describing his voyage to Europe). We have this son's authority for saying that many of his writings are still unpublished.

The Kunja Vihara (Gambols in a garden) is his best work and typical of his style and sentiment. It is a collection of songs, mostly his, and a few by his friends. It is a good example of his style, which is modelled on Sanskrit; in fact, the whole work is cast in that mould. He divides the collection into three sections, and calls them each a Vilasa (or enjoyment). Each Vilasa in its turn is divided into several other sections called Laharis (wavelets of a stream supposed to be running through the

बांधी न होत अकळावाति प्रीत चित्ते,
तो झंखना नहत दुःखद कोई रीति !!!

कुंजविहार. शृंगारलहरि. p. 32.

¹ The admiration that he excited in the hearts of some of his readers was equally extravagant. Eg., see the Sakshar Saptaka, A Septet of Litterateurs, in which an undue amount of praise is bestowed on him. These verses will be found quoted at p. 142 of साठीनु साहित्य.

garden) Chandrila (moon light) and so on. They are so thoroughly saturated with the genius of such poems in Sanskrit that their Gujarati counterpart rather bewilders an ordinary reader, who has not made a deep study of that learned language. Patriotism found a prominent place in his thoughts and writings and though inferior in many ways to the vigorous verses of Narmadashankar, his poems on the subject anticipated the direction in which several years after, the leaders of the nation would work. This very book (Kunja Vihara) has several sections devoted to Local Self Government and to the political aspirations of the people¹. Joy, patriotism and at times sadness in short are the prevailing characteristics of his poems. Subjective in form with a style

¹ स्थानिक स्वराज प्रबोधिना, प्रतापनगजन, प्रजारणगजन

(a) एकवार मेदान पड्या रण चड्या के धुमधु धुमधु !

अग तरंगित उमगथा शिरशत्रु शत्रुमधु शत्रुमधु !

शूरा सामद हो ! एकवार.

शरम शानि स्वदेश सेवामा ! मुरवत त्या कामनी शी ?

प्लेल पेलो करे, प्लेल बीजो करे,-- ए आशा कामनी शी ?

शूरा सामद हो ! एकवार

बुजावेहार, शूरतरंगिणी p 7

(b) ए भूमी अमारी, मैया अमारी, कोण अवर वहेसो निजनी ?

न देल उचरवा

ए स्वदेश माटे को रणयज्ञे, प्राण आहुति देल सजनी,

न बाहु उगरवा,

ए भूमा०

*

*

*

*

नयी राकडा, नयी बायला, नयी रे'वा नित दास सज्या,

कयम गाजी न कहिये ?

ordinarily graceful,¹ which occasionally becomes involved, his poems reflect the new spirit in Gujarati poetry.

છડ સ્વધર્મરંગી, સ્વકર્મસંગી, સ્વદેશનગી, પ્રેમભોજ્યા !

હરી એકજ હૃદયે—

ए भूमी०—कुजविहार, शूरतरंगिणी. p 1.

(c) મ્હારી હિંદને કોણ ઝડારે ?

કોણ કોણ એને ઝર ધારે રે ? મ્હારી,

कुजविहार, भरतदु खान्ति चिंतामणी. p 5.

(a) When once you have entered the field of battle and commenced to fight, you must carry on, you must strike at the head of your foe your body full of passion and zest O valiant Warrior when once you have, etc ,

What shame is there in serving one's country ? Of what use is hesitation there ? Of what use is the hope that the lead should be taken by this or that man ? O valiant Warrior, etc

(b) This land is mine, she is my mother who else can say that it is his ? I will not allow any one else to utter those words For this land, my native country, I will sacrifice my life O beloved in some field of battle, I do not wish to escape This land etc

* * * *

We are neither poor in spirit nor cowards nor have we been created to remain slaves for ever Why should we not proclaim it ?

I am full of the fervour of my religion rely on my own deeds and am desirous to fight the battles of my own country We are saturated with love and we are all one, O Hari

(c) Who is there, who will resuscitate my Ind who will wear her on his heart ?

1 See “એરે, પાસે વળ નુદાંજ ” ! ; ! p 8 of શગરચંદ્રિકા, કુજવિહાર.
The poem beginning with

પાસે તપાપી નુદાં રહેજુ હાથે !

નજર ઠરે વળ હૃદય સિંજાયે ! ! !

Alas ! we are fated to live near but still apart, the eye rejoices, but the heart burns.

In reading some of his patriotic poems one cannot resist the feeling that in words and sentiments they are but thinly veiled imitations of Narmadashankar's poems. Admiration of Lord Ripon's boon of Local Self Government distinguishes some of his work.

Much fun was made, by several writers, of Harilal's habit of putting a number of marks of exclamation and interrogation (! ?, ! ? !, ! ! !), at the end of each verse which made them appear bombastic, ridiculous and added nothing to their significance.

The Parsis who had very little share in the classical period have made large contributions to modern Gujarati Literature, in almost all its branches, poetry, prose, drama, history and other subjects. As would be expected, their contributions were primarily modelled on the literature of their ancient home, and only secondarily on that of their adopted one. Recently a third element has influenced their writings, but that element English Literature is a common factor influencing Hindu as well as Parsi writers. All the same, whether we look to the purely Persian standard by which they were guided in the early sixties and seventies, or to the standard of Hindu writers as in the case of the late B. M. Malabari, or to the English standard which guides them at present, we cannot but be struck with the large amount of work which Parsi authors have put into our Literature. Not only have they been generous with their pen, but they have been generous with their purse too, and encouraged poor but rising talent, Hindu and Parsi alike. It was a Parsi who assisted Narmadashankar liberally but anonymously, with money in

the hour of his dire need, when the poet's worldly possessions consisted of a four anna piece. It was the first Parsi Baronet who rewarded Kavi Dalpatram's poetic work. Like generosity adventure is also in their blood, and journalism and the first setting up of vernacular printing presses in Bombay were the outcome of their spirit of enterprise.

So far as the earlier poetry written by Parsis in concerned

it is an admitted fact that the spirit of Sa'adi Persian their early model and Hafez and Firdausi dominated and directed it. The mechanical construction of the verses, their subject matter and the association of ideas, all these were an undisguised imitation of Persian writings. If fact, one of the most typical writers of this Persian school who is selected here to represent this class, makes no secret of his having indented upon that Literature for all he required for his literary outfit¹.

Mancherji Kavasji Shapurji, who wrote under the nom de plume of Mansukh, lived to a pretty old age.

Mansukh Like many illustrious Parsis, Sir Jamshedji Jijibhai, J. N. Tata, Dadasaheb Naoroji, his

home was in the small town of Navsari under the rule of H. H. The Gaekwad. He was born of poor parents, whose business was to drive carts or bullock conveyances (वेहलवान). He migrated to Bombay at the early age of eight and was brought up under the guardianship of his uncle and aunt, who treated him very harshly. His education was utterly neglected in the beginning and the old Hindu Mehtaji (teacher) under whom he learnt his alphabet proved even harsher than his relatives. However, a philanthropic old lady, who once was a witness to

the cruel treatment to which he was being subjected, took pity on him and practically released him from the tutelage of his unsympathetic aunt and uncle. By dint of perseverance although battling with poverty, Mancherji succeeded in acquiring a good knowledge of Gujarati and Persian and later attended Mr Mainwaring's English School in Church Gate Street, where he made such good progress in his studies that the proprietor made him a teacher in that school (1846).

Here he developed his taste for oratory, journalism and writing on public questions. In 1848 he went to China to join one of the numerous Parsi firms which carried on a brisk trade with India then, and while there he continued his literary work. Seven years after (1855) he returned to Bombay and although overwhelmed with a lot of litigation in connection with his firm's affairs, he did not relax his literary labours. In fact he continued to work with his pen to the end of a long life. His collected writings, prose and verse are numerous and cover historical, religious, social and domestic subjects¹.

1 In imitation of a Persian work of the same name, he has called his collection ગજનામું. It consists of 1138 quarto (super royal) pages and is divided by him into 13 parts. Their titles betray the wide range over which his pen roamed.

Part I વૈતરીતા (Persian Prosody)

Part II અસતરી કેઢઢણીના ગુણો અને અવગુણો સ્ત્રી વાચવા લાયકની તકરાર. (A dispute or dialogue between a wife and husband on the merits and demerits of the education of women)

Part III રુસ્તમ અને તેના બેટા સોહરાય વચ્ચે થયેલી લડાઈનું વર્ણન દિલ્લ્મશીર દાસ્તાન (A very interesting chronicle of the battle between Rustam and his son Sohrab)

His best verses which when sung, have been said by his biographer to have drawn tears from the eyes of the audience, are those chronicling the death of Sohrab at the hand of his father Rustam and the lamentations.

- Part IV પહેલા સર જમશદેજી વારોનેટની જોદગાનો અહવાલ. (A biography of the first Baronet, Sir Jamshedji)
- Part V નામદાર મહારાણી વિન્ક્ટોરીયાના મરદૂમ મરયાર પરીનસ આલર્બર્ટ ને લગતો હેવાલ. (A biography of the late Prince Albert, husband of Queen Victoria)
- Part VI “નામ સેતાણ્ણિ” (An Explanation of a Parsi prayer).
- Part VII પારસી કોમના સંસારી કામકાજોને લગતા ચંધાણા ધારાની છામીઓ અને ચરાવી મરેલી મુલો વિશેની વાતચીત. (A conversation about the defects and pernicious mistakes in the Laws passed in respect of the social customs of the Parsi community)
- Part VIII “પારસીધારા” ના ચંધાણી છામીઓ. (A criticism of the defects in “Parsi Laws”)
- Part IX એક મરધાર અથવા દિલ્લરની જુદાઈ વિશેના એક અસતરીના ગમ અને યિલાપને લગતા સંજનો. (Words of a woman sorrowing at the loss of her husband or beloved).
- Part X હોદાઈ મોહબત, યગેરે તરેહવાર જાતની ઉત્તમ નીતિ અને પવિતરાઈ વિશેના સંજનો (Verses on divine love and other kinds of high morals and purity)
- Part XI તરેહવાર જાતની પરચુરણ તથા સીંચામણની બેતો. (Miscellaneous didactic verses).
- Part XII “મનસુઘી મોનાજાત અને અરજગુજારી”. (Prayers by Mansukh).
- Part XIII મરદુન ચમનજી વાવાના મરગને લગતી ચીના; અફીણના રોજગાર ને લેણદેણથી થતી ચરાવી. (An account of the life and death of Bomanji Hormasji Wadia. Ruin caused by the opium traffic)

of his mother Tehmina when she came to know of it. This episode in the Shah Nameh of Firdausi is considered one of the best in the Epic literature of the world, and is familiar to English readers in Mathew Arnold's fine poem Sohrab and Rustam. Mansukh's version, of which a few verses are given below, although considered worthy of praise by his biographer,¹ is jejune and devoid of that appropriateness of language, rhythm and solemnity which should always characterise the narration of such a touching incident as this. It is but a feeble attempt to translate into Gujarati verse the simple and sorrowful but at the same time inspiring lines of Firdausi. Perhaps when read out aloud with proper intonation and gestures, the innate beauty of the subject and its noble spirit of patriotism may deeply move an audience already prejudiced in the poet's favor, but it is difficult for a single reader to obtain any such impression of his power².

¹ p. 47, Preface to the Ganj Nameh, "The Poetry in the Chronicle of Rustam Sohrab bestows upon the composer the right to feel proud of it."

² *E.g.*, Tehmina's sorrow when she learns of the death of her son, an act committed unwittingly by his father; her lamentations are given thus in Mansukh's verses.

હાથે-રે એ બેટા, હાથે-રે સોહરાવ
 હાથે-રે એ માણનાં જુદ મનની મોરાદ
 હાથે-રે દીકરા દેલાવર દલેર
 હાથે-રે એ સ્થાઈના મેદાનના શેર
 એ સોહરાવ સગુણી એ દીકરા સમાગ
 એ કેઆણીની તોચમની રોશન ચેરામ

.....

His other contributions move almost on the same lines as those of his contemporaries Narmadashankar and Dalpatram. Like them he has written on education of women, when the movement was but just beginning to strike out against the shackles of conservatism, like them he has written laudatory verses on the leading lights of the day, like them he has condemned speculation in shares and traffic in opium and like them he has pleaded for the betterment of society. Hindu readers would not much appreciate the verses, because of the many unfamiliar words and phrases but apart from that his poems will be found to embody ripe judgment and lofty views.

The setting up of the first vernacular printing press in Bombay, already referred to was the work of Fardunji Marzbanji (1787-1874) whose family still worthily carry on the tradition. He was a voluminous writer and about forty-seven works stand to his credit. He migrated

ए माएनी हईआती ने खुशीना दम
 तु वगर कोण खासे मुज दु खनो गम
 ए " समनगान " ना सुवा, ए सुरा सगुन
 तु वगर यई मारी जीदगी जयुन

Ganj Nameh, p. 250

Alas my son ! Alas Sohrab ! Alas thou the hope of thy mother's heart ! Alas my son courageous and valiant Alas thou the lion of the field of battle O virtuous Sohrab O my fortunate son O thou living light of the Kayani dynasty The breath of thy mother's life and happiness now that thou art gone who will comfort her in her sorrow ? O thou the Governor of Samangan virtuous and valiant, without thee my life has become useless

from Surat to Bombay in 1805 after a bitter quarrel with his father. He belonged to a family of Mobas (Parsi priests) and his aged father thought that the knowledge he had acquired locally of Gujarati Persian and Sanskrit was enough to carry him through life as a priest. But the youngster, then only twelve or thirteen years of age thirsted after the wider knowledge and experience which only travelling could give him. His heart was set on going to Bombay but as he was not encouraged by his father, he left Surat secretly; however, he was and brought back, and to escape his wrathful parent's castigation he remained concealed in a cellar for three days. The old gentleman was impressed with the seriousness of his son's purpose and later on (when the boy was eighteen years old) he himself took steps to send him to Bombay, where he sat at the feet of the most distinguished Parsi scholar, poet and priest of the day the well known Dastur Mulla Firoz¹. He studied all he wanted to study, he took leave of his Guru with view to launch into some independent business, as the monotonous duties of a Parsi priest did not quite suit his restless mind and inventive brain.

¹ His name was Peshotan (1758 1830). He and his father had gone to Iran in 1768 to prosecute their study of their religion in its ancient home. The title of "Mulla" a learned man was bestowed on him by the Kbal of Bagdad. It was a rare honour conferred only on the most scholar priests. He wrote Persian poetry under the name of Firoz. The combination of these two words Mulla and Firoz, gives us the name which he is best known. His famous work, 'George Nameh' a chronicle in Persian verse of the conquests of the English in India to the time of King George III, is considered only slightly to Fir'dausi's Shah Nameh. A library of valuable Persian, Arab and Avestaic books, called the Mulla Firoz Library, keeps the of his scholarship and learning alive in Bombay.

In 1808, he started a book binder's shop. He next took a contract for preparing helmets and added to this the business of transmitting private letters from Bombay to various towns in Gujarat. These different activities were found insufficient to absorb the full measure of his energy, so that in 1812 he hit upon the idea of setting up a vernacular printing press, a thing which till then no one had ventured to do. His first difficulty was to get Gujarati types. There was no type foundry in those days and he prepared a set himself, utilising the services of the ladies of his house in moulding, rubbing and polishing the "bodies". In 1814 he brought out a Gujarati Calendar, and thereafter other publications followed rapidly. Eight years later (July 1822) his business had expanded to such an extent that he ventured to bring out a (weekly) paper, called the 'Bombay Samachar' which happily exists till this day as a daily and carried it on for a decade (till 13th August 1832). He purchased a ship and prospered in trade, but unfortunately in writing on the 'Kabisa'¹ controversy in his paper, he happened to offend his opponents and they threatened him with ruin. He was undaunted, but unscrupulous fanatics so managed matters that all his creditors at once rushed to him dunning him for their dues. About this time his ship, the brig *Hindustan*, was damaged on a voyage to Calcutta, and had to be sold for next to nothing, while his business with China resulted in great loss (1831). His friends (some of whom were at bottom his enemies) advised him to leave Bombay till the whole affair had blown over. He went to Bassien and later, under their advice, left

¹ A dispute of long standing between the Shenshabi and Kadmi sections of Zoroastrians about certain intercalary days in their year.

British jurisdiction and went to Daman in Portuguese territory to avoid his creditors (1832). He had enough with him to satisfy all their claims, but the advice of his "friends" broke him and though he built up a new life of usefulness by practising as a Hakim he did not win his former spirits. In the end he succeeded in winning himself a position of high esteem in Daman.

His poetical works as a link between the Parsi poetry of the eighteenth and the nineteenth century. The poetical portion of Sa'adi's *Gulistan* translated by him under the name of *कुलेस्थानपोयी* follows necessarily the lines of Persian poetry, but his other works are free from that influence.¹ The Persian element found in the *Siavaksh Nameh of Erwad Rustam Peshotan* (A.D. 1600) has disappeared to a great extent here, and Fardunji's works paved the way for those poets like Mansukh who followed him.

Bande Khoda, *Rustam Irani*, *Jabul Rustam*, *Parsi*, *Kalam Kash* and *J. N. P.*, are some of the more recent writers. Of these the last has been able to stir up some thought, probably on account of his position in life. *Jamshedji Nasarwanji Petit* (1856-1888) was

- ¹ ओ बाबा आदमनी ओलाद, साफ देलया तमो
सेतायश करो तेहनी-ने एकला तेने नमो.
नफो तेमा जोशो घणो, ने कदी ना जोशो हाण.
ते पोताना भगतोनुं, सदा करे छे कलेआण.

p. 119 *Kekobad's Life of Fardunji Marzbanji*

O Sons of Father Adam with a pure heart praise Him, and before Him alone. In this ye shall find much blessing never shall find any hurt. He evermore doeth good to them that worship

wrote over his initials "J. N. P.," belonged to the millionaire Parsi family of the Petits. His education left nothing to be desired from the modern point of view, as he had opportunities of studying in the best institutions of Bombay. His teachers found him a critical student of Shakespeare and the English poets. He studied Persian and Avesta, and his biographer,¹ who has also edited his poetical works, sets it down to his eternal credit that in spite of the sneers of his Parsi companions at school he imbibed such a strong love for his mother tongue, Gujarati, that from his earliest years he began to compose verses in it. This love developed as he grew older, and it gave birth to that well-known volume called *માહરી મજેહ તથા ઘીંજી કવિતાઓ* ("My Recreation and Other Verses")² which in the opinion of the very same editor marked him out as one of our premier poets.

Rhymeless verse, though found in Sanskrit, has not made much headway in Gujarati. The biographer of J. N. P. gives him the honour of introducing this form of metrical composition to Gujarati readers.

Two extremes characterise the opinions as to the merits of J. N. P's work. The Parsi view, as represented by his biographer and by a critic (supposed to be B. M. Malabari) in the Indian Spectator (1878-1881) who reviewed his poems as they came

¹ The late Mr. Jyibhai Pestanji Mistry, M.A. This biography is the record of a simple life, well spent in the service of his fellowmen a life unspoiled by the possession of wealth.

² It is a substantial volume (1892) of nearly five hundred pages, and comprises verses on Nature, the innocence of childhood, translations from the poetry of Cowper, Longfellow, Thomas Moore, Young, Gilman, Ben Jonson, Southey and other more or less well known English poets.

out in batches in monthly journals places him at the top of what is called the English School of Gujarati Poetry¹ On the other side we have the considered and reasoned opinion of a Hindu critic & reviewer of established reputation, Rao Bahadur Ramanbhai M. Nilkanth² who sees no merit whatever

1 (a) The language is simple though very provincial, but the style is so free from the trammels and superstitions of artificial writers that its very quaintness is music to the ear. The writer seems to have a meditative cast of mind and a lively fancy.

(b) 'In a spirit of calm interest and with a light touch the writer successfully treats subjects which would throw more excitable writers into convulsions of alternate delight and anguish. . . . Parsis ought to rejoice that they have a veritable Samuel Rogers in their midst.

(c) "The lines . . . possess unusual power and beauty of expression. They have all the quaint simplicity of the bards of yore and all the refinement of modern artists. J. N. P.'s verses form a distinct feature in the literature of Gujarat and will not only please the partial Parsi critic but also any Hindu of poetical proclivities."

(d) "We read these productions with the same delight with which we read a page of Cowper's Task or Thomson's Seasons." pp 128 131 of the Introduction to *માહરી મજદ*.

2 Discussing the merits of J. N. P.'s poetry at great length he says that it is neither good poetry nor good prose. No man whose ear is trained would find any harmony in these verses. In this book there is no *તાલ* the last words of the lines do not move evenly, but have to be pronounced in a way different from those in which Gujarati words are pronounced to grasp the full meaning it is very difficult to connect the verses and the reason for all this is what Mr. Mistri calls 'metre but which is really the stumbling fashion of pronouncing vowels' and so on (See *કવિતા અને સાહિત્ય*, pp 279 282). He quotes the following lines for instance to support his opinion

“दरियाना एक कोरा विषे”

बिया महासागरनु तलीयु हरी,

के पाकीने तु तेमा बन्यु हरी ?

in his book, and characterises it as mere doggerel. It is difficult to strike a mean between these two extremes, but this fact cannot be gainsaid that J. N. P. had a genuine affection for Gujarati poetry and he laboured according to his lights to free it from the artificial trammels imposed upon it by his brother Parsi writers. His conception of poetry and its functions was high based as it was on the study of celebrated English poets and the execution thereof though lacking in dignity and purity of language has all the appearance of following a high standard.

Reviewing Parsi Poetry upto 1880 Mr. Malabari himself
 Malabari's opinion of Parsi poetry
 one of the best of the Parsi poets thus summarises its position. Poetry is a rank growth among Parsis. Basketfuls of lyrical and cart loads of dramatic verses are turned out every year.

ઘયા હશે તુ પરધા વેપારી ઘહાન,
 કઈ સેંકડો પસાર; જે મોજાની હેઠ
 રેતીઓના રચકળમા તાહરુ વદન,
 પામ્યુ આજે તીપકીનુ રંગીત પહેરન,
 તે મોજામા કોન જાણે કેટલા મનસ,
 માગેલા ઘહાનમાથી પડતા હેઠલ
 તેં દીઠા હશે

ON A SEA SHELL

What was the ocean bed on which thou didst grow to thy perfect shape? Hundreds of merchant ships must have passed over thee. Who can tell how many men thou must have seen fall from wrecked ships down through the deep beneath which as thou layest in the sand thy body became clothed in varied hues?

* These lines contain neither good poetry nor good prose. (Ramanbhai's કવિતા અને સાહિત્ય, p. 28.)

by this remarkable race. But it is generally stolen ware, or very vilely manufactured. We know but of a half dozen. Parsis who have fathomed the true scope of poetry and her influence as a national educator. We have never had for our families such simple familiar verse as might be called the poetry of hearth and home and can mould the character of womanhood and childhood.¹ Since then Sorab Palamkot, Dr. Jalnewala, Dadi Taraporewala, Pestanji K. Taraporewala, Firoz Bathwala, and Dr D N. Patel have tried to relieve the situation. The work of some of them is indeed good,² while that of others is just passable.

¹ Indian Spectator, 18th January 1880

² E. g., The following lines taken from a long poem of Sorab Palamkot, on Sulochana, the wife of Indrajit the son of Ravana, hardly betray their origin as from the pen of a Parsi, an alien to Hindu religion and its Puranic lore

“ विलाप विभिषणनो सुणी, बोल्या त्यां रघुवीर,
मित्र शोक मिट्या हवे, वीर पुरुष धर धीर ”

Hearing the lamentation of Vibhishana Raghuvir said ‘Friend,’ thy grief is of no avail now, thou art brave, be patient too

Similarly the whole poem of स्वप्नवाटिका quoted by H. G. Anjara in his काव्यमाधुर्य (p 179, 2nd Edition) from the pen of P. K. Taraporewala is equally creditable.

“ वायु ! जेवो अनुभव अहि पामतो ह्या वहे तु,
धीमे धीमे सकल वसुधा व्यापतो ते रहे तु !
के सौ तेनु धवण करता शांति पामे सदाना,
चाख तेवो अमर सुख आ स्वप्ननी वाटिकाना ”

O wind ! Just as thou blowest here after getting experience (of this place) continue to blow slowly over the whole world in the same way, so that every one may obtain eternal quiet while listening (to thee) and taste the fruits eternal of this Garden of Dreams

By far the tallest amongst this group of Parsi poets is Behramji M Malabari (1853-1912). Left fatherless in early childhood with poverty staring him in the face, by dint of close application to his studies, he managed to learn sufficient in the schools at Surat to qualify him to appear at the Matriculation Examination of the Bombay University. Three successive failures did not daunt him, though all the while he was supporting himself in Bombay by teaching in private schools on a paltry salary of Rs 20 per month. The fourth attempt was successful. But he did not follow it up by entering any College for higher education. From his earliest days he had secured a very good command over the English language and his knowledge of his mother tongue was on a par with it. A great reader of classical Gujarati Literature and mixing freely with his Hindu friends in the ancient city of Surat he had managed to obtain a thorough acquaintance with their inner life, domestic and social, their thought and action. Very few Parsis can boast of such a creditable familiarity with the every day life of the members of their sister community. Malabari, holding forth on the manners and customs of Gujarati Hindus can easily be mistaken for a Hindu. Difficulties and disappointments strewn his path before he could settle down in life, but fortunately the friendships that he formed of large hearted Englishmen like Dr Taylor, Martin Wood of the Times of India, and Dr. Wilson helped him to find out the true vocation of his life—journalism wherein as Editor of the Indian Spectator, he made a great mark. His genuine feeling and fight for the amelioration of the plight of Hindu widows led him into the path of Social Reform, and won him the esteem and friend-

Creditable
familiarity with
Gujarati

Journalistic
activity
path of Social

ship of some of the greatest men and women of the time, both at home and abroad, and on his sudden death at Simla messages of sympathy poured in from the King Emperor downwards. With an impressive appearance and a philosophic turn of mind, his sparkling conversation and charming manners won friends for him wherever he went. Besides this he wielded a facile pen and his works, both in English¹ and Gujarati, have won high praise from distinguished scholars of both languages.

Even when he was a little boy in Surat, Malabari used to run after those itinerant minstrels called *Khualis*, who move about from street to street and sing songs which send a thrill of joy or sorrow and awaken infinite longings in the hearts of their audience. "It was with wandering minstrels he found his way to the world of the muses"². His poems are practically scattered over his whole life. His first collection of verses³ though written early was not published till A.D. 1875. His second work came out in 1878, his third in 1894, and his fourth and last in 1898⁴.

His verses
commendable

To us the *Niti Vinod*, though the earliest, appears to be his best and finest work. He had passed his childhood amid suffering women, and from their own lips heard the story of their woes. "He would often sit and listen to and weep with them as the tragedy of their lives obsessed his heart and

Niti Vinod
his best work

¹ Indian Eye on English Life and Gujarat and the Gujaratis

² p. 29 B. M. Malabari *Rambles with the Pilgrim Reformer*, by Sirdar Jogendra Singh

³ The *Niti Vinod* or the Pleasures of the Right Path

⁴ The *Wilson Viraha* the *Anubhaviikā* and the *Sansarika*

brain".¹ A large part of the verses refers to the wails and woes of child widows and ill matched couples, girl wives of old, decrepit husbands. A touch of reality and vividness pervades these clear, sad melodies, as the poet's knowledge was first hand and his feeling on the subject as keen as it was sincere.² Malabari was the apostle of persuasiveness and he seems to have avoided polemics, raillery, gibing irony or even strong language. Other Gujaratis who have worked on the same canvas are Narmadashankar and Dalpatram of the old generation and Narsinhrao Divatia of the new Malabari³

¹ p. 29 B. M. Malabari *Rambles with the Pilgrim Reformer* by Sirdar Jogendra Singh

² p. 37, *Ibid* 'He struck the deepest notes when singing of the woes of Indian women songs sad and despairing and freighted with infinite pathos'

³ Malabari thus describes the poignancy of a widow's grief

प्रभु पे'ल सुख न चखाइयु के, मुज बगाळने रे लोल,
भाग्या बूझाओ चडाळे के, बोझा बालने रे लोल
बाळ कामळीयु ओढाडयु के, पियुना नामनु रे लोल,
वेश उतरावी मन मनाच्यु के, गयेला श्यामनु रे लोल

* * *

डाक्यण दीसु हु पोताने के, सामे आरसा रे लोल,
ओळो खावा धात्र खीजीने के, खाता वार शी रे लोल ?
नेत्रो नाचा बेठा विजोगे के, राता चोळ बनी रे लोल,
काया गई कटराई कजायी के, आशा मन तणी रे लोल
पायो धुजे प्रेमपीडायी के, प्रीत मुकई गई रे लोल,
विधवा वेरागण हु व्रता के, वनमां जई रही रे लोल

"God was not pleased to allow my miserable self to taste the first happiness of my marriage. The demons broke my wooden bangles

has assimilated and followed all the good points of Dalpatram and eschewed the objectionable though perhaps more impressive language of Narmadashankar.

The death of his dearest friend and helper, Dr. Wilson, in 1876 moved him into writing a fine Elegy called the "Wilson Viraha" published in 1878. It is cast in the old familiar mould of Dalpatram's Forbes Viraha, and, judged by the standard of such poems, gives out a true ring. The whole life of the greatest and most popular Missionary on this side of India is told in a way which vividly reflects his altruistic and philanthropic work, and the great power he exercised over the citizens of Bombay by his love, humility and grace. There was affinity in the life-arms of both: devotion to the service of suffering men and women.

(emblematic of a woman's husband being alive) and shaved my hair. They wrapped round me a black (coarse) cloth, in the name of my deceased husband. By depriving me of my usual ornaments and dress they pacified the soul of my husband, dead and gone. * *

In the mirror opposite, I appear like a witch to myself, my reflection appears as if it would swallow me up in wrath, and what delay could there be for the same? Through bereavement my eyes are sunken and become fiery red. Disappointment and calamity have shrivelled up my body. My feet are shaking with the intensity of passion while love is dried up. I am a widow, a wandering ascetic and a childless woman. I am dwelling in a desert "

Compare this with the verses written by Vallabh Bhatt depicting the misery of a young girl married to an old husband and quoted at pp 151-154 of "Milestones in Gujarati Literature". The miseries described here seem to be an echo of the miseries described there. Perhaps those verses inspired these, as they (the older ones) are very popular.

In his later work the *Anubhavika* (1894) or Verses based on Experience¹ some readers² see more of poetry than in the *Niti Vinoda*. It was a great success, and met with a welcome and an appreciation which brought Malabari fame and many friends. There is no doubt whatsoever that he has versified in his book some of the experiences which most men are sure to meet with as they grow older and come to close quarters with the world. A casual glance at the list of topics selected will shew the range of these experiences: Do not Heaven and Hell exist? Learn and Labour³, Why do you fear Death? Whatever is born dies, The World is Selfish, Affinity of Hearts⁴, Hypocrisy, A Shameless Person.⁵ The best lines in this collection are the opening ones where he offers prayers to Mother Gujarat.⁶ In the verses describing the vicissitudes of man's lot⁷, and a friend in need⁸ he has acquitted himself well.

1 In his still later work, the *Sansarika*, he calls them *સાતી અનુભવના કાંઈક શાંસા ઉદ્ગારો*: Some faint impressions (literally, expressions) of personal experience.

2 See *સાઠીતું સાહિત્ય* p. 150. "In the *Anubhavika* poetry shines more than in the *Niti Vinod*."

3 જ્ઞાન પ્રહોલી જ્ઞાન. કામ કરોજી કામ.

4 મનુષ્યમેલ.

5 નકટો.

6 ધન ધન મરવી ગુજરાત ! માતૃશ્રી મારી રે;
નિરસી વદન ક્ષ્મલ રઢિયાત, ગાઉં ચલિહારી રે.

Victory, Victory, great Gujarat, my mother, seeing thy pleasant lotus like face, I sing thy praises.

7 એવું પગ મેં દીઠું.

8 દસતનો સાથી.

Malabari's acquaintance with the rules of Gujarati prosody was more than passing and he is one of the very few Parsi poets who have submitted themselves to the rules of prosody and composed verses in well known and at times difficult metres. He may have tripped here and there and may have failed to grasp the intricacies of the short (છુટું) and the long (ઘુટું) syllables¹ but on the whole he has succeeded well.

In spite of his intimate knowledge of Gujarati and the Gujaratis one finds him often committing mistakes which no Hindu would commit in the use of certain phrases².

The happy idea struck the poet's son of having selections made from his poems and with a still happier inspiration the work was entrusted to a kindred spirit one of our best poets Ardeshir Framji Khabardar. He published the selections under the title

His collected works

rector of Public Instruction to be seditious and his printing office was visited by the police. The matter was hotly discussed for months and the Government of Bombay exonerated the poet from all ill will towards itself. Lords Northbrook, Ripon and Reay in the House of Lords testified to Mr Malabari's steadfast loyalty. He himself did not care to make much of this unpleasant incident.

The matter was finally allowed to drop. In Sansarika³ Malabari had merely preached his gospel of social reform. He exhorted his people to be up and doing and his words were misinterpreted to mean what he never meant them to convey (pp 60-61 B M Malabari, by Sardar Jogendra Singh).

¹ As he himself admits in his Preface to the Sansarika.

² In the અનુભવિકા in the very opening lines માઠ બલીશરીર is incorrect. It should be ખાઠ બલીશરીર. In the Wilson Viraha (p 14) he says પ્રમુદે પાપા મુમને પ્રમ પ્રસાદનો, પ્રસાદ is generally eaten and not "drunk."

of "Gems from Malabari's poems,"¹ and also contributed a lengthy preface, giving the outlines of Malabari's life, and a discourse on his poetry in particular and on the state of poetry written by Parsis in general

Ardeshir Framji Khabardar, a native of Daman, has endeared himself to all lovers of Gujarati by his fine poems

Khabardar His place is already established in the ranks of Gujarati poets, and some of his verses have become so popular that even small children, recite them—no small honour and cause for gratification to a living poet. His well known verses on "Gunavanti Gujarat" are so popular, that they compare, so far as taking their place in the hearts of Gujaratis is concerned, with the famous poem "Bande Mataram" of the Bengali poet, Bankim Chandra Chatterji. To a great extent his style has now formed itself. From 1897 he left off the old style and wrote in the new or modern style. There is not much prospect of any further change and he seems to have settled down to the use of a style of his own. From a mass of poems published in monthlies he has till now brought out four collections of verses.²

Like Malabari he too has submitted himself to the rules of prosody, and has written verses not only in the different छंदs, but has by a process of combination and permutation produced some new ones.³

Mr Khabardar has written English verses too

¹ मलबारीन काव्यरत्ना. (1917)

² काव्य रसेका, विलासिका; प्रकाशिका, भारतनौ टकार.

³ बदल छंद ध्वनित छंद, तौटकमणी छंद.

The poet seems to be a great and deep student of that branch of modern Gujarati poetry which is modelled on that of Wordsworth, Tennyson and Shelley, technically called subjective, and whose pioneer as well as whose best and foremost representative is Mr. Narsinhrao Bholanath Divatia. This school endows nature and scenes with life, with soul, with thought, and extracts lessons from them. This study has impressed Khabardar so much that we see in his poems a great resemblance to the work of the Hindu pioneer, so that it might be mistaken for imitation, if not plagiarism, but for the knowledge that the Parsi poet possesses both individuality and originality of his own. Stars, divine music, clouds, rain, these topics are common to them both, and on reading Khabardar's verses one finds in them not only ideas, and sentiments and turns of thought and phrase common to Narsinhrao, but also identical themes. It looks as if it were merely a *rechauffe* of Narsinhrao's work¹ but it is not really so.

- 1 (a) “मुज सह हसती पण आखे आसु शरे,
तडकामो पडतो घरसादज जेम जो.”

विलासिका : प्रेमचक्षु.

Compare this with Narsinhrao's lines in *बुसुमसाढा*, p. 83.

“जे'वी को मृदु सुन्दरी रदन करती जाय,
महिं घेरे स्मित चळकतां, द्वेषी रचना आ रम्य जणाय.”

or

- (b) “कदी कदी कंद यादज पडे,
रुपेरी धारे जो रडे.”

विलासिका : तारा.

The idea of stars weeping tears of silver conveyed by these lines is found in Narsinhrao's poem at p. 46 of *हृदयधीणा*

“रुपेरी खांसुनी धारा,
रहमे रेटजो गगनतारा.”

He could weave good imagery¹ and when that is combined with the simple language of his poems and their sweetness two invariable features of his work, sufficient reason can be found for the extreme popularity he has secured with his Hindu readers: Parsis with a few exceptions do not claim him as one of their best, as they fail to follow him in the flights of his imagination, because of the difficulty of fully comprehending his meaning in a style or language which they eschew as Sanskritized 'high' Gujarati but even they admit the charm and music those two or three songs² which have forever found for him niche in the temple of modern Gujarati poetry.

With all its beauties and its affinity to the work of Hindu writers Khabardar's work has not been pronounced free from

- 1 " તારલિયા મ્હારે ત્યા રાજ દિવાળી દીપવ,
મ્હારે આગળ ચંદા ચોક પૂરિને જાય,
મ્હારે માઢવ જાય સુવર્ણજ સૂરજ વેરતા,
આવો, આવો મ્હે પધારો મ્હારે ત્યાય,
આવો, મીઠી વાત કહીશ રે, માનવી. "

આશાદેવીનું ગાન

Every day the stars make Diwali illuminations (Feast of Lamps) in my mansion and the moon decorates its courtyard with coloured patterns the sun departing in his course scatters gold on my bowers Come Come welcome to my house Come Ye men and I will tell you sweet tales

Song of the Goddess of Hope

- 2 (i) ગુણવતી ગુજરાત (ii) Verses on the death of G. M. Tripathi
(iii) Welcome to Dadabhai

those defects which are natural to one not born a Hindu¹ in a rather lengthy but detailed review of one of his works (The Vilasika) Mr. Narsinhrao has shown in the Vasant (Samvat Years 1963 and 1964) by concrete examples that this Parsi strain, though a very thin one, peeps out through his poems, and in some slight measure injures their faultlessness.

Bamanji Khurshedji Framroz (1848-1920), born in Navsari of poor parents, remained poor, and, though dogged by misfortunes, serenely pursued the profession of his pen. He belonged to the Mobed or priestly section of the Parsi community, and had by passing several ritualistic tests thoroughly fitted himself for sacerdotal work. His study of Gujarati, Urdu and

Framroz Persian was unique. On coming over to Bombay in private service, he soon changed into the journalistic line, devoting himself as a minor occupation to writing plays for the stage. While on the staff of the Gujarati daily, the Bombay Samachar, as its sub-editor for nearly two decades, he employed his leisure moments in contributing to several humorous papers, such as the શતરૂઢ and the વચડાદ stories sketches and verses on the current topics of the day. Poor health in Bombay, however, compelled him to return to Navsari, from where he went on sending out a steady stream of

His varied work
 1 A stranger would on seeing his poems at once take them to be written by a Gujarati (Hindu) His કાવ્યરસિકા and વિલાસિકા are books written in correct Gujarati. Undoubtedly an experienced eye will at once find out that the writer is not by birth one endowed with the genius of correct Gujarati " (જનથી શુદ્ધ ગુજરાતીનો ગસ્કારા નથી) સાટીર્વું સાહિત્ય, p 160

This observation has not gone unchallenged. In his Introduction to Malabari's Select Poems he has tackled this subject of Parsi and Hindu Gujarati and attempted to give an answer to his critics

articles to the Bombay papers on all sorts of subjects, religious, political, social and literary. The assumed names under which he wrote, काका भकनजी वीन मकनजी, बीरबल, etc., have become familiar to all readers of the well-known Bombay daily, the Sanj Vartaman, and the weekly, the Gujarati, and they read his contributions with avidity.

A great lover of natural scenery, he had roamed over the jungles and hills round about Navsari, and as a result he produced a fine novel called *वाहरोटनी खोरशेद*, the scene of which is laid in the Barot Hills, famous in the history of the Indian Parsis as the place where the sacred fire was at one time kept safe and burning.

A sad accident while getting out of a tramcar in Bombay necessitated the amputation of his right leg at the knee, but in spite of this infirmity, coupled with bad eye-sight and old age, he went on unflinchingly with his literary work which shewed all the vigour and fertility of his youth,¹ even in old age.

A few years before his death he was presented with a "purse" by his friends and admirers in appreciation of his good and sound work. After great hesitation, he accepted the gift with all the humility of a novice.

His published poetical work is not much in quantity but a large mass is still lying unpublished. His mastery over Persian prosody and poetry is seen in every line of his work, called

¹ E. g., between 1908 and 1915 he produced nine works.

સચ્ચુને રાહત,¹ while the verses written to welcome the Diwan of Baroda on his visit to Navsari in 1890 show that he could compose in Gujarati prosodial metres too. Similarly verses welcoming H. H. the Gaekwad to Navsari are written in a faultless and correct vein.

He is one of those voluminous Parsi writers whose works go beyond the score, which is the general standard of the *prolificness of their pen*.

Perhaps it would not appear quite in order to speak of living poets but where for all practical purposes we find some of them like Narsinhrao, Nanalal, Manishankar, Khabardar, Lalit, settled, with no prospect of change, each in his own groove, it may not be considered an offence against propriety if the main characteristics of their work are noted here.

Narsinhrao Bholanath Divatia, B.A., C.S., (Retired) who "first diverted the course of the river of Gujarati poetical literature into new channels,"² was born in Ahmedabad in 1859. The son of a poet, with every facility for higher education, he did very well in his College career. In submission to his father's wishes he entered Government service, and as the representative of a respectable family was nominated under the statutory

1 અથવા નીતિ ભક્તિ કૃપી કવિતાઈ ષષના, the use of the word કવિતાઈ (poetical) betrays the Parsi hand. કવિતાઈ is incorrect no Hindu would use it. See R. B. Ramanbhai's criticism on the use of the word at p. 288 (footnote) of his કવિતા અને સાહિત્ય. He says it is as correct an adjectival form of કવિતા as "poetical" would be of poetry.

2 "ગુર્જર કાવ્યસરિતાના પ્રચલિત પ્રવાહને નવીન દિશામાં ગતિ આપનાર." સચિત્ર સાક્ષરમાઝા (1912), પૃ. ૧૬૧.

Civil Service Rules to an Assistant Collectorship in the Revenue Department in 1883. He served in Gujarat, Sind, and the Deccan and retired in 1912. He was one of those who do not allow the duties of office to interfere with the work lying nearest their heart and who always find odd moments for indulging in their favourite recreation. Much of Narsinhrao's literary work has been done while discharging the exacting duties of a Revenue Officer and a Magistrate. In fact, his life in the Districts and the tours that he had to undertake officially in the country have furnished him with materials which he has skilfully woven into song. After retirement, he suffered two heavy blows, he lost at short intervals a grown up daughter and a son both promising young writers. The characteristic resignation and fortitude with which he bore his losses were the wonder and admiration of his friends who only then found what a reserve of calmness lay behind a temper which on superficial observation seemed to be short, excitable and argumentative. In retirement he has devoted himself wholly to literature and hardly a month passes without some contribution from his pen in the shape of poems, philological discussion or critical reviews in the pages of his favourite magazine, the Vasant.

Life wholly
dedicated to
literature

Well versed in Sanskrit and Prakrit he is equally with Mr. Keshavlal Harshadrai Dhruva considered a great authority on old Gujarati Language and Literature and the Wilson Philological Lectures that he delivered in 1915 at the invitation of the Bombay University reveal his scholarship and mastery over the subject, and are considered a land mark in the history of our language and literature. Most intimately familiar as he is with English, Sanskrit and Gujarati prosodies,

Scholar
Philology

he has steered clear of the overtechnicalities their knowledge would engender, and his verse though correct to the very last degree from a prosodial standard read so well on account of the use of apt words that one forgets at times that some of them are innovations

It is the opinion of some that Narsinhrao succeeded where Narmadashankar failed the latter had a great desire to assimilate the characteristics of modern English with Gujarati

Poet of sub
jectivity poetry Narsinhrao did so and at a bound changed the whole outlook of his countrymen

Subjectivity and descriptions of nature such as we find in Wordsworth in Shelley in Keats in Tennyson, are the bed rock of his work and notwithstanding their novelty and their unusualness these characteristics have taken a firm hold of the imagination of not only those who are educated on the modern lines in Colleges and High Schools but also of those who have never gone beyond the confines of primary schools, viz., the teachers of vernacular schools and Colleges. The *Kusum Mala* (A Garland of Flowers) was his first work. It is a collection of poems mostly lyrical with some descriptive of natural scenes. His pictures are vivid and betray minute observation of the manifold states of nature poetising all that he observed. The whole collection is full of a joy in life, a delight in its functions a feeling of satisfaction natural to the buoyancy of youth. In his later work the *Hridaya Vina* (the Lute of the Heart) we miss the buoyancy of the earlier poems which is here replaced by a spirit of seriousness. His imagination has soared higher, and tenderness of emotion prevails in every piece. He has been able to communicate to his readers the same emotions and feelings as swayed his own heart, a characteristic found only in poets of a high order, like Narsinh Mehta or Dayaram. Narsinhrao's poems and lyrics and songs

are unique, correct and faultless from every point of view, as the poet himself is, if anything hypercritical of the work of others, he would on no account allow a mistake to pass in his own. Stars, Clouds, the Moon and Moonlight, have monopolised his imagination, and hence another poet¹ has called him the poet of the Stars, the Moon and the Clouds.

When his poems were first published they came in for a lot of adverse criticism at the hands of the late Prof. Manulal N. Dvivedi, who month after month attacked his taste and his work in the *પ્રિયવદ્ધા* and the *સુદર્શન* edited by him. He called his poems Western, or rather foreign exotics, flowers without beauty or fragrance². R. B. Raman-

First recep
tion of his
poems bhai Nilkanth took upon himself the task of replying to him, and in the *Jnan Sudha*, in a series of articles he controverted the opinion of Manulal and shewed that the exotics were neither devoid of beauty nor of fragrance, that it was wrong to say that Western flowers merely had attractive and dazzling colours, and contended that Narsinhrao's poetry, whether judged by Eastern or Western standard, was really an oasis in the desert of Gujarati poetic literature³.

On analysing Manulal's criticism, R. B. Ramanbhai found that its adverseness was due to the notion that had carried

¹ G. M. Tripathi

² “પાશ્ચાત્ય કાવ્ય કુસુમો પ્રાયશ્ચ રસ રૂપ ગદ્ય વાજેત છે” these are his exact words

p. 21 કવિતા અને સાહિત્ય “મૂઢા અરખ્યમા એ લાંલુ કુજ ધામ.”
These articles are reprinted in *કવિતા અને સાહિત્ય*. See pp. 324 et seq.

away the critic that the poems inculcated really the tenets of Christianity, which was like gall and worm wood to an individual who professed to be a staunch supporter of conservatism in religious matters. This was a mistake as Narsinhrao did no such thing. There is a plausible resemblance between Christianity and the Brahmo creed in which Narsinhrao believes. Hence the confusion.

Between the Kusum Mala and the Hridaya Vina there is an interval of nine years. The third work *नुपूरसंकार* (Jingle of Anklets) came out in 1914. His subsequent work a sort of InMemoriam composed in memory of his young son and called the *स्मरणसंहिता*, Book of Memories (1915), is a grand Elegy surpassing all his former efforts. While preserving all the characteristics of his poetry and its music, it unfolds with a refreshing certitude his large faith in the goodness of God, which even this, the greatest blow that a parent can suffer in his declining age, proved unable to shake. It reveals a large reserve of resignation on which he can successfully fall back. It shows a spirit that can stand erect, with all the humility that a human being can summon, in the face of unaccountable Divine displeasure, without losing confidence in the Divine goodness and clemency. It is God who gives, and it is equally His privilege to take away. So be it, says the poet, and with a pathos in which there is just a touch of the solicitude of a parent for his son, he seeks only one favour for him, asking the Divine Father to take back tenderly to His bosom a weary child wayfarer, who has

returned to His home after his wanderings in the world of woe.¹

A few extracts are given in the notes below to illustrate the new spirit which he breathed into Gujarati poetry.²

1 The lines in which he solicits the All Merciful to take back the child to His bosom, are amongst his very best, and for their tenderness, for their pathos, and for their music can be compared only to some of the best lines of Tennyson.

મંગલ મંદિર ઓલો,
 દયામય, મંગલ મંદિર ઓલો,
 લીયન વન અતિવેગે ઘટાવ્યુ,
 દ્વાર ઓ શિશુ મોઢો,
 તિમિર ગયું ને જ્યોતિ પ્રકાશ્યો,
 શિશુને ઓરમા લ્યો લ્યો,
 દયામય મંગલ મંદિર ઓલો.

Open Your auspicious temple, O All Merciful, open Your auspicious temple. With marvellous swiftness has he crossed the wilderness of life and the innocent child is standing at your gate. For him has Darkness vanished and Light dawned. Take, Oh take the child to Your bosom, O All Merciful, opening wide Your auspicious palace.

2 (a) ફૂલ સાથ રમત (Playing with flowers).

નાહિ તમના કુટિલતા રે નાહિ વઢી કૂરપણુ,
 નાહિ વચન કાટના રે હૃદય પ્રેમાલ ઘણું. કુમુદમાળા.

(But) In you there is no cunning, neither is there any cruelty. Your words are not deceitful and your heart is very affectionate.

(b) દિવ્ય સુદરીઓનો ગરવો (A song of heavenly nymphs,)
 viz., ચંદ્ર, શુક્ર-તારા, તારાસહી (the moon, Venus, and a sister star).

“ હમે તેજનાં બાલ સહુ, સૌંચીને નિજ નૂર,
મનુજ હૃદય ગુંગાવતું હરિયે અંધ તિમિરનુ પૂર,
હવે રિપુ પૂર તિમિરનું.
તેજે ઘડ્યાં અમ અંગ, અમોલા તેજે ઘડ્યાં છે,
કરિયે ન તિમિરનો સંગ, તિમિર અમ ઘેરી ઠર્યા છે.”

હૃદયવીણા. p 35.

We are all children of Light and by pouring out our light we carry off the flood of blind darkness which chokes the heart of humanity ; the flood of darkness (gloominess), the foe of joy. Our bodies are created from Light, Yes, Light invaluable, we have no fellowship with Darkness, for darkness we hold to be our foe.

(c) મધ્યરાત્રિએ કોયલ: (The Cuckoo (heard) at mid-night),

નગર વધું આ શાત મૂતુ, ચાંદની પળ અહિ સુંતી,
ને વાદળીઓ ચપલ તે પગ આ સમે નવ જાગતી.
અનિલ ધીરે મરે પગલા પહે શાંતિ રહે સહુ—
હ્યાં ઉછળતી આનન્દ રેલે, કોવિલા બોલે—ટુહૂ !

The whole town is sleeping peacefully, and the moonlight too is asleep; even the restless cloudlets are not awake at this time. The wind treads gently, lest silence be disturbed, only the cuckoo, bounding on the waves of joy, is calling “Toohoo—Toohoo.”

(d) “વિરમતાં ગાન ધિરમી સહુ જાય,

મધુરતા એ નવ સાંચી રસ્તાય,

મધુરતા અનુપમ કેરો સાર—

વિનશ્વર કેમ કર્યો કરતાર ?

કવિત પદ મુજ ટકશે શ્વ વાલ,

ગાન તુજ શમશે શમતાં ધાર.

વિનશ્વર આત્મા, સ્થાયિ શરીર:

જોડે અન્યાય થયો હું અધીર.” (Dedication: Hridaya Vṛndā

Professor Balvantrao Kahanrao Thakore, B.A., has published a pretty little collection of his poems and called it *Echo*¹ The poems, though not all of a very high order, betray flashes of true poetic insight here and there The importance of the

When music ceases everything else ceases It is a sweetness which cannot be preserved Oh why did the Creator make the quintessence of matchless sweetness liable to destruction? My poems may endure for a while but thy music (the music sung by the poet's brother) will cease as soon as the song is sung I could not bear to see the injustice of the body being made immortal and the soul mortal

(e) Some of the best poems in the *नूपुरझकार* are those in which he translates portions of Sir Edwin Arnold's *Light of Asia* or the *Great Renunciation* (महाभिनिष्क्रमण) Only a few verses are quoted here to show how well he has brought out the spirit of the original

“ म्हणे प्रेरता तारक धृन्द ! आ हु आव्यो रे,
 दु ख हूच्या ओ जग जन ! आ हु आव्यो रे—२३
 तम फाज तजु मुज राज्य, सुखो बहु विधिना रे,
 राज मन्दिर सुखमय साज, रजनि दिन सुखना रे—२४

(सार्खी)

तजु सर्व ए आ क्षणे, सहि थकी दुस्त्यन एक,
 राणी मधुरी ! ते तजु, हये तुज मुजवल्ली व्हाली सुरेख ”—२५

उपूरझकार, PP 99 and 100

- Oh mournful earth !
 For thee and thine I lay aside my youth
 My throne my joys my golden days my nights
 My happy palace —and thine arms Sweet Queen,
 Harder to put aside than all the rest ”

1 धनकार (1911) The first page shows an attractive little picture of a cherub-like child sitting alone in the midst of beautiful woodland scenery with his hands at his ears, trying to make out whence comes the echo that he hears

volume, however, consists in its introduction which gives a number of arguments in favour of writing what are called "verses which cannot be sung" (અગેય પદ્ય). It is his contribution to a heated controversy that has been going on for some time as to whether verses should or should not be such as can be sung.

Rao Bahadur Hargovinddas Dwarkadas Kantawala (born A.D. 1849) has had a distinguished career in the Educational Departments of H. H. the Gaekwad and the British Government. After his retirement in 1900 he joined the service of a native state. His interest in Gujarati Literature has remained unabated all along, and the debt that our Literature owes him for his

magnificent edition of the series consisting of 35 volumes of the works of old Gujarati poets can never be repaid. He was backed up by the liberality of H. H. the Gaekwad's Government, which has always been ready to encourage such publications. He has written prose but very little poetry, and he is noticed here in connexion with poetry because of a short but vigorous poem called વાળીપત or વાળીપત (1867) which he has composed to describe the several great decisive battles fought upon the plains of India. Viewed as a pure piece of poetry,

Rao Bahadur
Kantawala

And his verses
on Panipat

The poem entitled વધામણી ('Greetings') is a sweet lyric describing the feelings of a young wife presenting her new born son to her consort.

ચીજું વ્હાલા શિર મુકી જ્યહાં 'માર સામે હું ?' વહેતા,
ત્યાં સુતેલું યજન નયું પીતી ઋતુ મ્મક વ્હેતાં;
મોહં ચૂસે બસુટ રસપી અંગુઠો પત્ર જેવો,
આવી, લોઈ, દયિત, સ્વચરો લેચને કોળ લેવો ?

there is not much merit in it, but its simple and vigorous language and the patriotic motive which inspired it give it its value. He has been impartial in denouncing both Hindus and Mahomedans for bringing India down to its present state by their short-sighted policy. He has displayed much historical knowledge in the poem and several episodes are very feelingly described in simple language.

Damodar Khushaldas Botadkar though without an English education, has written some commendable
 Botadkar Gazals¹ besides several poems, in the collections entitled कझोलिनी, स्रोतस्विनी and निशारिणि.

¹ See, for instance, the following couplet, which portrays accurately the feelings of a lover and his beloved.

(a) “अहो सत्स्नेहने अंगे, सुद्ध ए चोलयु छाजे ?
 चहे जो प्रेम आदरने, नाहि ए प्रेम प्रेमीनो.”

काव्यमाधुर्य. p 134.

Does it become you, friend, to speak thus, where there is true love ?
 'If love expects a welcome, it is not the love of a lover.

(b) Addressing a cloud, he says.

परंतु कै जहुं तुज हृदयमां व्हाल विल्से,
 अने एथी आशा धरी अधिक आ अंतर हगे.
 तने जीर्ता लेषा अम निरुक्त शक्ति कंड नथी,
 तने आकर्षणी अमल अनुरक्ति कंड नथी;
 परंतु प्रेमांना दर कंड अपेक्षा नव धरे,
 निसर्गेयां निले मकळ जनना सकट हरे.
 तने ए सन्मार्गे प्रिय अधिक व्हाली ! विचरवु,
 यशः काये जीर्ती, जग नजरणी मात्र मरुं,
 अने एवीरिती अवनिवल आशी उतरजे,
 वृषापी कन्याणी ! प्रति भवन पीदूय भरजे.

स्रोतस्विनी: p. 17

Manishankar^x Ratnaji Bhatt B.A., (died 1923) though later he diverted his energies towards religious and philosophical matters, such as the study of the writings of Swedenborg, at one time wrote under true inspiration, and his short poems are held in great esteem. His poems entitled *વસંતવિજય* and *અક્ષયકમિયુન*,¹ wherein for the first time he wrote in a happy blending of different metres which greatly heightened the effect of what he had to say, are gems, and his *Welcome to Guests* is another gem.² His descriptive powers are great, and though his ideas in some poems are ordinary yet they are invested with a dignity all their own.³

¹ For instance, note the following lines where the male *અક્ષયક* bird laments his fate before his mate.

“લંબા છે જ્યાં દિન પ્રિયસત્તી, રાત્રિએ દીર્ઘે તેથી,
આ પેશ્વર્યે પ્રગયસુખની હાય ! આશાજ કેયી ? ”

Where the days are long, dear companion, the nights will be equally long. Alas ! What hope is there, therefore, of happiness under such a system of divine laws ?

૨ “મહેમાનો ! ઓ વ્હાલો ! પુનઃ પધારજો !
તમ ચરણે અમ સદન સદૈવ ગુહાય જો ! ”

૩ “બેસીને કોમજાણે ક્યંદિ પરમૃતિકા ગાન સ્વર્ગીય ગાય,
ગાલી નાંચે હલાયી રાસિક હૃદયને-પૃત્તિથી દાય નાય.
સાંમઢ્યું મોહ પામીને હવે કોઠિલિ રૂઝન;
પ્રિયા પંચમ પૃથ્વી ન્હાવાનું ધાય છે મન. ”

વસંતવિજયઃ કાવ્યમાધુર્યઃ p. 171

The cuckoo sitting in some unseen spot sings its divine song, which moves the heart of the lover so powerfully that it melts, and he loses control over his feelings. (He says), “Now that I have heard this song of the cuckoo and become charmed with it, I have a desire to bathe in the shower of my beloved's music.”

Kavi Nanalal Dalpatram M A the son of a poet has already worked his way up and very high up too, by sheer force of individuality. Serving in the Educational Department

Nanlal with an inclination towards poetry, he has been able to utilise his leisure to its fullest extent, and his many poems, long and short, especially the latter, have taken an unprecedented hold of the popular mind, notwithstanding his "original" mode of writing metreless verse, which is neither poetry nor prose (though some people call it "impassioned prose")¹ Fortunately for Gujarati literature he has not adhered to this hobby throughout, but has written some very remarkable pieces of metrical poetry,—songs and lyrics, which have endeared him to the hearts of the men, women and children of Gujarat. It is not enough to say that

Elegant and graceful some of his lines are simply beautiful. They have an elegance about them and a grace which remind one of feminine grace, of the softness and tenderness embodied in the ideal of the fair sex.

In the newer batch of poets, Nanalal resembles none. Usually the product of modern education, he stands alone. He stands by himself.

His latest work, a play in verse, called *Jaya and Jayant* embodies an idea which is alien to the social tradition of Hindus. He preaches in it the cult of permanent celibacy. He has had a host of critics, some inveighing against the ideal preached by him.

¹ आदेशानुसृतं गद्य. His opinion is that the flow of poetry should be unfettered by any rules. It should be spontaneous and free.

some attacking his hobby of writing metreless verse, which is no verse at all, some crying out against his crabbed style, which instead of making his meaning clear, confuses it, but all agree that there are parts of the work where the expression of sentiment and thought is unusually telling. His earlier play, *Indu Kumar*, which partakes of the same characteristics evolves an ideal of marriage which is both simple and dignified. "The husband must swear to be faithful to his wife, and the wife must swear to be faithful to the husband, these mutually pious promises constitute marriage" ¹

There are two sides to Nanalal's longer and larger poems. One is philosophic, where he expounds his own views on certain outstanding incidents in the worldly life of men, the other poetic, where, in the smaller poems, the full force of his charming pen is felt. Some of them are, indeed, like little snow flakes floating in the air or tiny bits of gossamer, which cannot bear the touch of a heavy hand, but which still delight the senses. Such for instance, is the song sung by the little flower girl, *Pankhadi*, with which the play of *Indu Kumar* opens ²

- ¹ પતિએ પત્નીમત લેયુ,
 ને પત્નીએ પતિમત લેયુ,
 એવી પરસ્પરની પુણ્ય પ્રતિજ્ઞા લે સમ.

 इन्दुकुमार, भा. १, प्र. ७, पृ ११२-११३.

- ² एक एक धीरो हतो, धीरो हतो,
 रहेनी रहेनीने पाद नई बेटो,
 हो एक एक धीरो हतो, धीरो हतो

Nanalal's dainty little volume tastefully illustrated, containing an Ode to the King Emperor¹, composed on the day on which Their Majesties the King and the Queen landed in Bombay on 2nd December 1911 deserves praiseworthy mention. The welcome accorded to the Imperial couple is full of loyalty, and reminds Their Majesties of the past glories of the country whose sacred soil they have graciously chosen to tread. As a piece of historical retrospect, as an admonition to his countrymen and to their rulers and as an epitome of the history of India's activities in days gone by, activities which always worked for peace (शान्ति)² there is nothing to approach it in our modern literature. Hastinapur (Delhi) where Their Majesties were to be crowned has perhaps never been so well set off with the background of its past greatness as the metropolis of an historical Empire,³ as in this Ode.

He has stayed long in Kathiawad and come under its influence. The pastoral life led by many of its inhabitants its rustic scenery and its bardic history⁴ have found in him an apt and sympathetic poet.

1 राज राजेन्द्रने

2 p 21

3 “अनेकानेक छे, राजन् ! भूगोले राज्यधानीओ ;
दिल्लीना जादूने मोह, दाखवे नहि अन्य को !”

O King ! on this earth there are many capital cities but none of them manifests the magic and enchantment of Delhi

4 His bucolic called धण (p 24 काव्यमाधुर्य), where he describes the day of a goatherd in Kathiawad.

There is one peculiarity about his shorter songs. They are adapted for singing by little girls, specially little girls of Kathiawad, who join hands and then move round and round and sing them to the accompaniment of a drum slowly beaten, played upon by one of them.¹

1

વીરાના વારણાં.

- (a) હમ્મા ! વીરાને જાડં વારણે રે લોલ ;
 મોંઘા મૂલો છે, મારો વીર જો !
 હમ્મા, વીરાને જાડં વારણે રે લોલ.
- (b) આવો આવોને સહીઓ આવ,
 રસ તાઢી પાઢી,
 કાફે ગંજયો આવળી વ્હેન ! આ ગુર્જરી વાઢી.
- (c) ફૂલડાં કટોરી.
 ફૂલડાંમાં દેવની હથેલીઓ રે વ્હેન,
 દેવની કટોરી ગુપ્તી લાવ ;
 જગ માલળી રે વ્હેન !
- (d) વીરની વીંદાય.
 મ્હારા કેમરમીના કન્ય હો !
 મિયાવોજી રણવાટ,
 આમ ધુજે, ધરળી ધમધમે, રાજ !
 પેરા પોરે શંસનાદ ;
 દુંદુભિ ચોલે મહારાજનાં, હો !
 રામન્તના વીરવાદ ;
 મારા કેમરમીના કન્ય હો !

The Bhagvad Gita has attracted many poets in the past to attempt to render it into Gujarati verse. Translation of the Gita Nanalal too has succumbed to the temptation, and has translated it as an oblation or offering from him to the *manes* of his father on the anniversary of his death (1910). Its introduction in prose is erudite and in verse autobiographical.

Dolatram Kirparam Pandya (1854-1916) was a native of Nadiad and a Nagar Brahmin by caste. He was for a long time the Karbharī of the State of Lunavada, and was known as an able and shrewd man. His two poems, the *Indrajit Vadha Kavya* (a poem on the death of Indrajit the son of Ravana) and his *Suman Guchchha* (a Bouquet of Flowers) have earned him a place in the ranks of recognised poets. Indrajit, the son of Ravana is one of the most outstanding and valiant personages in the epic of the Ramayana, and his death at the hand of Lakshman, Rama's brother, after a very heroic fight, has inspired the pen of many poets. The very best vernacular poem on this tragic event in the house of Ravana, (in the vernaculars of India), is that of the Bengali poet, Michael Madhusudan Dutt. It is unapproachable and imitable in its grandness. Beside it this Gujarati version pales into nothingness. It is written with the plumb and the line in the hand. Writers on poetics lay down that a *Maha-Kavya* (long poem) must include in it descriptions of night, morning, forest, fights etc., and accordingly one finds them here, whether in place or out of it.

Dolatram
Pandya

Bhimrao Bholanath, the brother of Narsinhrao (1851-1890), has left amongst three or four works¹ one which has brought his name prominently forward. This work *पृथुराज रास*, chronicling a most chivalrous incident in the history of India, in spite of the drawbacks of undue license in grammar, and its occasionally involved style, is characterised by beauty, grace and elegance. Good knowledge of Sanskrit coupled with higher studies no doubt determined the trend of his work. Being an epic, there is an undercurrent of a strong patriotic feeling running through it².

Janmashankar Mahashankar Buch (born 1877), who writes under the nom de plume of Lalit, is a Vadnagara Nagar Brahmin

¹ *आवुर्जन*; *मेघदूत* a translation (1870) *देवलदेवी* (1875) a play: *लाघव्यमयी* and *ज्युबीली*.

² As a specimen of his lyric style, see,

एक सेनापतिनुं मध्यरात्रे चिन्तन.

आ शां अगग तारावृन्द रे, दीपे श्याम निशामां?
सहु हळीमळी जाता सग रे, दीपे श्याम निशामा.

* * * *

बोंक मळे, को टळ्ळळे रे, को रण जाती साय,
कोक मूर्ती स्वप्नामां जोती आयी अडियो पियुनो हाय रे;
दीपे श्याम निशामां.

काव्यमाधुर्य. p. 89

Look at these countless hosts of stars shining in the dark night, they move together in harmony.

One meets her husband, another pines for him, a third one accompanies him to the battle-field and yet another, lying asleep, sees in her dream the hand of her dear husband touching her;—(while) these stars are shining in the dark night.

of Gondal in Kathiawad. He writes very short poems, and is always to the fore with his pen whenever any important event takes place, on anniversaries or at the death of great men, on big holidays or festive occasions, or on days when conferences

or large assemblies meet. When the inspiration supplied by such topics is absent he wanders into religious and devotional paths, and his poems, always in graceful language, though with a pronounced Kathiawadi strain, and with well turned periods, take one back to the spirit of the real Kathiawad whose wandering minstrels excel in that peculiar form of religious

songs known as Bhajans. The full force of their capacity to affect one's mind is felt when the poet himself sings them with suitable accompaniment,¹ the music that lies latent in them comes out now to soothe, then to excite under the stress of his singing. The excitement, however, is mild, there is complete absence of frenzy. Indeed there could be very little of frenzy when the songs have a distinct leaning towards feminine softness and lack the vigour of masculinity.²

1 The मंजीरा and एकतारो

2 The following two poems called दुखियाना बेली and मदूला, are Bhajans pure and simple. The third is a welcome song composed to welcome the Gujarati Sahitya Parishad which met at Rajkot in 1909.

(a) धा सुणिये दुःखियानी व्हाला ! वधु बनिये.

वधु बनिये रे ! मना बेली बनिये,

मकन जननीना जाया,—

एकज शिरछत्र छाया,—

रक भाडुना रखवादां लेइए !

Dear ones, We must listen to the cry of those in distress and become their brothers. We must become their brothers, nay their helpers. We

Rao Bahadur Ramanbhai Mahipatram Nilkanth, B. A.,

Ramanbhai
Nilkanth

L.L.B., (born 1868) who is better known as a critic and reviewer and best of all as a humorous writer, has essayed a little poetry in his earlier days, writing under the nom-de-plume of મકરંદ (honey).

are born of the same mother, sheltered under the roof of the same father, we must therefore take care of our poor brethren.

(b) મટૂલી મજાની પેલે તીર, સંતો વ્હાલાં !

એનેરી અમારી એ લગીર !

વૃક્ષો વેલડીઓનાઝાં, કુમ્ભ્ય પઢ્પૂલ રસાઝ્ય;

લહેં જાઓ લ્હાણું એ લગીર !—સન્તો—

O dear holy saints, there is a fine hut on the other bank (of the river). It is our small, incomparable hut There are trees there encircled with creepers, there are dainty fruits and fragrant flowers Enjoy the humble gift, O saints.

(c) અમે તો કાઠીયાવાડી, સરઘ સૌરાષ્ટ્રવાસી,

મૂંઝ્યાં ડરભાવનાં પ્રમુ મક્કની મૂમી અમારી.

અમ હેલિયે આયો સજન,

પથરાવિયે દિલઢાયરે;

રેલી કસુંબલ રંગ નયને,

ચેતનાજ જગાવિયે !

We are Kathiawadis, simple-hearted dwellers of Saurashtra. We yearn for your good wishes Our land is the land of the worshippers of God.

Welcome to our hall, gentlemen, we bid you welcome to our hearts' feast, and pouring the reddening Kasumba into your eye awaken life in you.

The metaphor employed can be easily understood by the people of Kathiawad, as it refers to the customary gathering (ઢાયરા) of friends on the verandah (ડેર્લો) of some great man, for partaking of opium (કસુંબો) which if taken in a moderate quantity makes them lively (ચેતના), though making the eyes red (કસુંબલ).

The sentiments are distinctly of a higher order than are met with in many poems written by college educated men and so far attractive. Of the few poems he has written the two which refer to domestic sorrows are the most pathetic ¹

¹ तु गई and रेखाश्रूयता refer respectively to the deaths of his first wife and his child

- (a) त्वारे गई शु अहिथी प्रिया तु ?
 मूषी गई आ हृदय रीवातु,
 महो फरे छे रवि आसपास,
 छाया फरे ज्या वचमा पदार्थ
 प्रदाक्षिणा ए प्रिय बेरी सर्वे,
 क्या हु फर रे तुजविण मध्ये ?
 शु काई शोधु कहिं धूमकेतु,
 जेने अगाडी वधतोज देखु,
 जेने न मये कई खेचनारु,
 पाछो फरे जे नहि कोई सार.
 ने छोडी सर्वे सुख शांति प्रीति,
 स्वीकारीने सगत तेनी नित्ये,
 नवा नवा रोज प्रदेश भाळु ?
 जाउ अहिथी—अहिथीज जाउ ?

At last beloved hast thou gone from here leaving this heart in torture ?

Planets revolve round the Sun shadows move round their substance
 All this is the movement of one loving entity (or object) round another
 Round what shall I move when you are not the centre ?

Should I find out a comet which is seen always moving forward ?
 There is no central object to attract it, and it never returns for the
 sake of any one Should I voluntarily give up all peace and quiet and
 accepting its companionship, visit new climes from day to day and
 depart from here from here ever to depart ?

Besides these names quite a large crop of minor poets have sprouted up during the last ten or fifteen years, as witness their performances appearing almost every month in the monthlies, and every week or every day at times in daily newspapers like the Bombay Samachar

(b) હતો તું તુ બાઢ ! અને ગયો છે ?
 કે ના હતો ને નર્થી તું ગયો રે ?
 કે તું હતો ને હર્જીણ રળ્યો છે ?
 એ સર્વે શંકા મુજ કોણ તોડે ?

* * *

વીર્જી ધરા છે, નર્થી મૃતિકા જ્યાં,
 ન ધ્વંસી આવારની વંચના જ્યાં,
 ન ચલુ મીનાં વિરહે થતાં જ્યાં,
 અણંડ રૂપે તું વસ્યો સદા ત્યાં.

Wert thou in existence, Child ? and hast thou gone away ?

Or wert thou not in existence, and hast not gone away ? Or wert thou in existence and art still living ? Who will solve all these doubts of mine ?

There is another world, where there is no (mortal) clay ; where there is no illusion of perishable forms ; where eyes do not shed tears because of bereavement ; thou art living there for ever, in an immortal form.

(c) The poem from which this extract is taken is modelled on Shakespeare. It is called *તત્કાલ મહિમ*, Philosophy of "Do at once" or *Caspe Diem*.

ચલુ ગૂઢ તરમો વેસનિ જો ગાય મીઠું કોયલ :
 ચાલે પહીં તે એક ને પછી વંધ તે અદ્ભુત સ્વર ;
 ગાનાર ના દેખાય ને તે જાય મગલું સ્વપ્ન શું,
 તે એક સમનું મંજુ ગાયન ના સુષ્યું તે ના સુષ્યું.

* * *

which, it seems is so bent on encouraging the versifiers' tal that it never stops to consider whether the effusion it publishes is possessed of any poetical merit or not.

Poetesses too have flourished during this period, but not quite to that extent that is found in the older times. Here too quite a lot of them contribute to the monthlies, but their number is necessarily more restricted than that of men. The quality of their work is decidedly inferior, beyond uttering a few platitudes they have done nothing, they have conceived nothing original. Their work is a mere fifth rate copy of the work of their brethren. Not a single female writer has reached the height of Miranbai, none can reach even to her knees. There are, however some ladies who have written poems of some merit.

Mrs Sumati (d 1911) the daughter of the Hon ble Mr Lalubhai Samaldas, C S I may be mentioned as one who attained to some fame with her pen. But she died too early to reach the full development of

तरुणी स्वहृदय रहस्य बहेती दृष्टि नीची राखीने,
 त्या गालपर ते समय सुरखी उछळी रही राती जे;
 ते चित्र पामे नाश ज्या उत्पन्न यईने क्षण टक्यु,
 तेपर तहिं तत्काल चुवन ना लीधु ते ना लीधु

Sitting in the deep shadow of the trees the sweet song that the cuckoo warbles lasts for a moment only and then that wondrous voice ceases. The warbler is not seen yet, when it goes all vanishes like a dream. That divine sweet song of a moment if not heard then remains unheard for ever.

The red blush that suffuses the cheeks of a maiden revealing the secrets of her heart, with eyes cast down it is a picture that vanishes in a moment after it comes into being and if it is not kissed then, remains un-kissed for ever.

her poetic powers. She was directly connected on her mother's side with the well-known literary family of R. B. Bholanath Sarabhai of Ahmedabad, and thus it is easy to account for the taste she acquired for literary pursuits when quite a child. Her poem *દિવ્યમેષપાલવાલક*, a translation of Browning's poem *Saul* shews that she was capable, if life had been spared to her, of considerably improving the commendable work she had commenced having imbibed her inspiration from her uncle, Narsinhrao Bholanath.

Mr. Vijayalakshmi (d. 1913), wife of Harshadrai Vithaldas Trivedi, wrote a number of poems on various subjects, only a few of which have been published in periodicals like the *Vasant*, *Sahitya*, and *Buddhi Prakash*, others are still to be published. Her verses entitled *પ્રેમયાચના* (Begging Love)¹ make a fine little poem presenting a Hindu wife's ideal of a husband.

To sum up, Gujarati poetry after the times of Davaram has passed roughly speaking through two phases: an earlier one represented by Dalpatram and his school, and a modern one represented by poets like Narsinhrao and his followers. Narmadashankar represents the period of transition; he stands,

¹ નિર્ધન દુ યીનું ધન્ય છે નિર્મલ્ય રુદ્ધ હૃવડ,
 જ્યાં સ્નેહનું સામ્રાજ્ય ત્યાં છે સુસ સારું સ્વર્ગનું ;
 જ્યાં સ્નેહ છે ત્યાં રુસ છે જ્યાં સ્નેહ છે ત્યાં સ્વર્ગ છે,
 વિગ સ્નેહ વા'લા ! સ્વર્ગ તે મન માથે તે નર્ક છે

(Sahitya October 1913)

Happy is the poor pretty cottage of the wealthless and the unhappy, where love reigns supreme there is the happiness of heaven there. Wherever there is Love there is happiness wherever there is Love there is Paradise. Dearest of Love Dear (husband) heaven is (like) hell to my mind.

as it were, on the threshold of the new era that was dawning and while not turning his gaze away from the past, prepares a hearty welcome for the new phase which was the inevitable result of contact with the living literature of the West. Whether the advent has been beneficial whether it has contributed to

General Re
view of poetic
literature

the development of originality in thought and conception, whether all who have tried to follow the new ideals have acquitted themselves creditably, it is for the critic to consider.

We can but note the passing of the old and the advent of the new, not an abrupt or a violent advent, but gentle and imperceptible, men like Narmad acting as its heralds. The movement has not yet reached its fullest development.

CHAPTER III

PROSE

There was no literary prose worth much in the older days. Whatever there was consisted of medical recipes, ritualistic directions, stone or copper plate inscriptions, Sanads and Firmans, deeds of sale, mortgage or gift. The nearest approach to literary prose was a translation here and there of some ethical work like the Panch Tantra or the Hitopadesha. The tendency was all the other way—celebrated prose works like

Bana's *Kadambari* were sought to be versified instead of being translated into prose. His torical events like those mentioned in the *Kahanadade Prabandh* instead of being set down in prose were rendered into verse. The earliest systematic attempt to write Gujarati prose was made by men like Ranchhoddas Girdharbhai and his assistants when they prepared handbooks for the schools and teachers they were bringing into being¹. The attempt, however, was not made with a consciousness that prose was equally important as a vehicle for imparting thought as poetry, but from a utilitarian point of view. They required text books to carry on their work and they wrote them taking the language just as they found it. A few instances of the kind of prose they wrote are given in the earlier part of this book and the language

¹ See the unexpurgated edition of the *Narmagadya* (September 1865) p. 341 where Narmadashankar laments the absence of prose and dates its beginning from A. D. 1828 through the exertions of Captain Jarvis.

is by no means elegant, it is only tolerable at the best. In the course of evolution elegance and grace come last. Attempts made by Christian missionaries to translate the Bible into Gujarati were equally valued as from a literary point of view¹.

This remark would not hold good in the case of some of these translators or revisers themselves e.g. the Revs. A. Lyric and Taylor, or Dr. Glasgow and Scott, or the learned writer of the paper himself, as their language bears all the characteristics of a cultured author.

The biographies, the histories, the scientific works that these pioneers of modern prose wrote were, as it has been said, not written with a view or consciousness of creating prose literature in the language. It was necessary to reach the children of the uneducated masses, and that could easily—rather only—be done by talking straight to them in unembellished language. That is what worked with them. The real credit of writing prose, creating Gujarati prose, belongs to Narmada-shankar, who has succeeded far more as a prose writer than as a poet, and who has left to Gujarati literature an abiding legacy of works on History, ethics, social topics, religion and philosophy which, considering the days in which they were

¹ Extracts from such translations are given by the Rev. J. S. Stevenson, M. A. B. D., of Rajkot, in a paper read before the Sahitya Parishad held there, giving a short historical description of the different translations into Gujarati of the Bible. In 1820, 1821, 1823, 1907 translations were made and published by English missionaries and illustrative paragraphs quoted in the paper show how this Padri Gujarati has emerged, and how it stands by itself in spite of large sales of these books. A short list of such missionary works is given in the ઉપદેશ સંગ્રહ at page 275.

written, certainly entitle him to the gratitude of Gujaratis as a benefactor of their language. With only just a slight touch of that peculiarity in speech and writing characteristic¹ of the Nagar Brahmin of Surat, he wrote language which was direct matter of fact simple and easy, and therefore understood by a large portion of the moderately educated class. Because it was direct, it had strength and vigor. Because it was matter-of-fact, it could at once yield the meaning of his statements. It was not classical, it was not cultured. Though he drew upon Sanskrit for emphasising or illustrating his point, his style was not Sanskrit-laden nor ostentatious. All the same, it had the merit of not being vulgar. It was dignified though to a limited extent.²

His best conception however, was to supply the want then felt in Gujarat of a historical work, comprehensive and general, dealing with both ancient and modern times. He called it the Rajya Rang (The Vicissitudes of Kingdoms). There were scattered works in the shape of translations on the history of

1 The use of *મિ* for *મે*, *તું* (2nd person singular) and *તહે* for *તું*, and *યોગ* for *યજ્ઞ*.

2 Vide his writings in the fortnightly journal called the રાટીયો or Night Watchman, which he started somewhat on the lines of the Spectator on 1st September 1864, along with Nagindas Tukudas Mirfata B. A. LL.B. and Thakoredas Atmaram both now deceased. This રાટીયો is an institution peculiar to Surat and Broach where before the establishment of the present Police force the duty devolved upon the watchman (generally a Dhedi) of going about on his rounds at night and on beating his drum and crying out "Awake, Awake" in order to scare away thieves and other "night birds". The journal [called રાટીયો] was meant to scare away evil doers particularly during the times of the Share Mania. It attained to an unprecedented popularity, because it was very outspoken in its comments, and because its style was "spicy."

Egypt, Babylon, Chaldea, Media and Persia, Greece and Rome and England. But there was no connected work, there was no history of the world there was no work which set out in full

the glorious deeds of our ancestors, the heroes of the Mahabharat and the Ramayana, the Rajputs of Chitod and Mewad. He therefore

planned this work¹ and recounted in his own words, the chronicles and deeds of the heroes of the Iliad, of Babylon, Egypt, Rome, Greece, Persia, of Rama and Lakshman of Sanga and Pratap. His style, in conformity with the gravity of the subject, has dropped most of its roughness and assumed a seriousness which it did not afterwards drop. Thus Raja Rang period was

in fact, the second or middle stage of his prose writing, which came to an end with the publication of the धर्मविचार (Thoughts on Religion), whose style is epigrammatic temperate, grave and pointed. In order to express and impress his views he had to have recourse to reasoning, and the great merit

of his style in this book is that, in spite of this drawback of having to write on disputatious topics, he has preserved his

1 Narmadashankar is said to have studied more than two hundred historical works, to enable him to write this epitome of the world's history

2 This धर्मविचार is the book which brought him into great discredit with his former friends and admirers. The same burning sense of patriotism, which prompted his former writings, was responsible for the publication of this work, in which he has entirely abandoned his former views on social and domestic reform, and fallen into the groove of a conservative orthodox Hindu. It is a reasoned out position that he has taken up, and his biographer Navalram though not agreeing with him, sees nothing reprehensible in the change. He asks, did not Cardinal Newman change? It is the courage of conviction even when charged with inconsistency, that is to be admired.

innate simplicity and directness, which constitute the best elements of the book ¹

¹ It is not possible for a reader, unacquainted with Gujarati to appreciate the difference or distinction in the various stages of his style as a mere translation of the passages can never convey either the one or the other

As an example of his latest style, take the following passages from ધર્મવિચાર :

(a) નિયતિ વિષયમાં હિંદુઓ ને પ્રજ્ઞતિ વિષયમાં હિંદુસ્થાને જગતને મોહિત કીધું છે. હિંદુસ્થાનનું ધન જોઈ ક્રિસ્તીઓ આવ્યા વેપારને અર્થે ને પછી આદિની અવ્યવસ્થાતામાં ધણીઆતા થઈ પેટા. ગરીબ હિંદુઓ પોતાનાં ઘેરાં છોકરાંઓ સાથે આજ પગ સુધી છે તેવા યુરોપમાં શ્રીમંતો પણ નથી.

સુધારાની નિષ્ફળતા

(b) સૌનું એકય થશે એટલે દેશી સમસ્તનું એક સ્વરૂપ ઘડાઈ રહેશે, તે પછી એ સ્વરૂપનું હુંપણું-દેશાભિમાન પ્રગટ જનાશે, ને તે પુષ્ટ થયું કે તેના જય ગાજશે. આપણે સંસારના યશ સુસતી સૃષ્ટિ ન રાસતાં કેવલ આચાર આદિના ધર્મ ને મર્યાદામાથથી પાર્શ્વે આપણે પરતંત્ર અને દામણા થયા તો હવે તરતને તરત પાછી ધર્મદ્વારા આપણી સ્થિતિ સુધારવાનો સમય નથીજ, અને નિયતિ શાંતિનાં વિચાર દર્શાઈ જઈ પ્રજ્ઞતિ સત્સાદના વિચાર ઘટતા જાય છે.

સ્વદેશાભિમાન.

As an instance of his rough, undignified style in its earliest stage, take the following passage :

આ રીતે મહારાજો દેવને નામે પોતાના પેટના કદુલ્લાં મરે છે અને કુત્તાં વધારે છે.

વિધવી શુરવિધે—નમંગલ.

From the very beginning Narmadashankar was conscious of his merits as a prose writer. In the preface to his Narma Gadya he proudly challenges a comparison between his style and that of the other writers of the period, Pranalal, Kavi Dalpatram and Mahipatram.

To Navalram, however, belongs the credit of writing the best prose during this period. He moulded Gujarati prose as no one else had done before him, and as very few have done after him. He too was a fellow townsman and a friend of

or this :

ઓ લોકો, આ હું ઢાંડી પીટુંછું, ઓ ગરીબ લોકો સાવધ થાજો. ઓ આંધડાઓ, લુચ્છાઓ અને खोटાઓ, પાછા દેખતા પ્રમાણિક અને સ્વરા ઉદ્યોગ કરવે સ્વરા થાનો.

નર્મગદ્ય p. 371.

the use of this word થાજો for થજો is peculiar to the Nagar Brahmins of Surat.

The following extract from the રાજ્યરંગ shews the style he adopted between the first and the last,

જેમ જેમ રોમમાં મોક્ષમજ્જા થઈ તેમ મુલકમાં કારભારીઓ, લોકને દમવા માંડ્યું. દહેરાં ને મકાનો છૂટવા માંડ્યાં. હજારોને ગુલામ દાસલ થેચવા માંડ્યા. શ્રીમંત લોકમાં વિશેષ વિશેષ માન મેઢવવાને સરસાઈવાલો લોમ, ઉત્પન્ન થયો ને તેઓ સરકારી કામદારની જગા મેઢવવાને અતિ સ્તંભિલા થયા. આટલી ઉમર વિના કોઈ સરકારી કામમાં દાસલ થઈ શકે નહિ એવો વાવડો થયો હતો.

રાજ્યરંગ p. 329.

નર્મગદ્ય. Expurgated Edition. (1909)

Narmadashankar whose biography from his pen furnishes the best example of his style.¹ Its merit was that it was

1 His first review of Narmadashankar's poetry was written in 1867. His last contribution on the subject was made after his death (1887). The following extracts (a) and (b) are taken from the first review (Naval-granthavali Vol. II pp. 3 and 4), while (c) is from the last.

(a) આ માપર્થી તપાસી જોતાં નર્મદાશંકરના લખાણમાં ડચી 'જાતની કવિતા જણાય છે. પ્રેમાનંદમટ, સામઢમટ, દયારામ અને નરસિંહ મહેતા જે ગુજરાતી કવિયોમાં પહેલા ધર્મના ગણાય છે તેમાંથી માત્ર પ્રેમાનંદજ નર્મદાશંકરની જોડે ચેસવાનો કંઈ દાવો કરી શકે એવો છે. નરસિંહ મહેતાનાં પદમાં, અત્યંત ભક્તિ, તે ભક્તિમાં સમી ગણુ થોડું પણ હંડું બ્રહ્મજ્ઞાન, અને વીજા ધર્મનો શૃંગારરસ જોવામાં આવે છે. એના શાંત રસમાં જ્ઞાન અને નીતિચોપ છે, વૈરાગ્ય નથી.

(b) જાર પ્રીતના જુરસામાં યેદ અને સોવની લજ્જા તોડી આગઢ ધસતી સાહસ ધીટ અધીરા પરકીયાનું વર્ણન દયારામે તો રઘાડે છોગે કીધું છે. દયારામભાઈનું શૃંગારરૂપી રત્ન, સારાં પાળીએ ચમકતું, નાયિકાભેદ વિસ્તીર્ણ, સુષર્ણ-સરસા શબ્દોમાં જડિત, અને તાલ-ગુરના તૈજોમય સિંધુમાં તરતું છે, તોપણ માપાના યાદબાચી અઢધા ઘોટાયલા-નર્મ શૃંગારરૂપી સદા ચઢતા અને વીજાને ચાઢતા નુદ્ધ સુરજની આગઢ તે રત્ન મને તુચ્છ અને રમત સરસુ લાગે છે

(c) આજકાલ જે આઝા ભરતપાંડમાં સર્વ ટેવાળે લમાનાની શ્લોક ધર્મ સંરક્ષણતરફ દેસાય છે, તેની અસર પણ ગુજરાત રાતે પહેલ પહેલી નાજુક પારદયંત્રની (Barometer) વેટે નર્મદાશંકરનાજ અંતઃકરણપર ઘર્ષ, ઘટલે એ પોતાનું મતાંતર જાહેર કરવામાં કાંઈનય ચોટી લજ્જા ન રાચતાં, તે દષ્ટિએજ દેશદેહિના વિચાર પ્રયોધ-તરમાં અમળીપદ શરમ કરું. ટૂંકમાં આ જમાનાની, ઘટલે પાછળ

suited to the subject on which he wrote,¹ it was suited to the class of readers for whom he wrote², and was free from artificiality, bombast and pedantry, natural to one who had lived the life of a school master. His history of the English People³, an original work, mirrors forth the vicissitudes of the nation's struggle for liberty and constitutional monarchy so vividly, that even school boys can follow on account of the simplicity of language and perspicacity of style, without any effort, the lessons meant to be conveyed by it.

Even though he says what he has to say gently, his style is inspired and forcible. Gracefulness is found in every sentence. At times it appears to be intoxicated, but really it is sober, thoughtful, and possessed of the quality of weighing both sides. In his writings as a rule one never comes across a useless or redundant word. He always wrote after consideration and thought, and looked to the capacity of his reader and the propriety of his subject.

ત્રીશ પાત્રીશ વર્ષમાં ગુજર મંઢલના ચિન્મય આકાશમાં જે જે લીલાઓ ચડે છે, તેની ચેરેચરી મૂર્તિ નર્મદાશંકરજ છે. નર્મદાશંકરનેજ આ કાલની સમય મૂર્તિ અમે ગણીએ છીએ.

Preface to *Narma Kavita*,
Dated 1st December 1887.

¹ His many "reviews of books" are instances in point (Vol II of the *Navalgranthavali*).

² His contributions to the *Gujarat Shala Patra* (the Gujarati School Magazine) intended for teachers of primary schools, unacquainted with the English language, are marvels of clear, simple and informative essay writing (Vol IV, of the *Navalgranthavali*).

³ A posthumous publication edited by Prof. B. K. Thakore B.A., one of the finest Histories of England in the language.

Sometimes he would change and rechange a word five times, if he thought it inapposite¹.

Navalram's chief claim to fame rests on his "Reviews."

Navalram,
Reviewer in ex-
celsis

There were no reviewers before him. There were reviewers contemporaneous with him such as Narmadashankar, and there have been reviewers after him, men like Manilal N. Dvivedi,

Mansukhram S. Tripathi, Rao Bahadur Ramanbhai M. Nilkanth, Narsinhrao B. Divatia, and Professor Anandshankar B. Dhruva- amongst the well known ones, and others of a sort. But Navalram stands at the head of them all. His method of reviewing a work was educative. He would first trace the history of the subject matter of the author's book, then evolve from it certain *criteria* which must be satisfied before the subject could be well treated, then examine the work in the light of those tests, give a few words of advice or encouragement to the author (specially so, if he happened to be a beginner, or a newcomer in the field of literature), and then wind up in a way which made the reader feel that he had learnt something new, something useful; and the lesson impressed itself on his mind imperceptibly, without his having to make a conscious effort to learn it. The erring or imperfect writer did not wince under the birch, so gently was it administered. A great many of these reviews, by means of generous quotations from the original work or a skilful and rapid sketch of the theme, placed the reader so intimately in possession of the theme of the author, that he felt no difficulty in appreciating the contents of the book even without having read it. We may take as instances his reviews of the life of Karsondas Mulji and the life of Durgaram Mehtaji written by R. S. Mali-

¹ This is the substance of an opinion expressed on his style at page 165 of *સાદીનું સાહિત્ય*.

patram Rupram¹ While enlightening the reader and the author by laying down certain canons² which a biographer must follow to fulfil his duty, Navalram takes us through the incidents of the lives of the two individuals in such a way as to make us feel as if we had read the original work itself. He criticises the work but not in a carping or fault-finding spirit. He tells the writer that he could have laboured to gather more materials and should not have rested content with what had come to hand without any ado or trouble, that he should have given both aspects, private and public, of the life of the individual and not only his public one that he should have tried more to enter into the real mind, the inner thoughts of his subject.

In reviewing works of pure literature he was equally at home. The first Gujarati novel, Karan Ghelo, and the play, Kanta, and the picture of intrigue rife in Native States presented in Gardhavsan³ have for instance, been reviewed by him so ably and intelligently, not to say impartially, that it is difficult to stint praise or admiration for his pen. Neither the first attempt of Rao Bahadur Nandshankar nor the guinea stamp of a University degree of Manlal Nabhubhai nor the exercised pen as a writer of long standing of Rao Bahadur Hargovandas Kantawala, the respective authors of the three books, deterred him from pointing out defects in their work. In the region of

Reviews sympathetic as well as corrective

¹ Pp 93 and 115 of Vol II of the Navalgranthavali

² "A biographer must specially possess the faculty for discovery (of materials) truthfulness powers of discrimination (विवेक) and description' p 95, Ibid.

³ Pp 179 185 207 of Vol II of Navalgranthavali

poetry, although his study of English poets was not so wide as that of others who were regularly educated in colleges, he seems instinctively to have come to right conclusions, and to have rightly grasped the most material Points of the subject. Navalram's biographer, Tripathi, has critically examined this part of his contribution to the literature of Gujarat, and has traced its development through its triple stage (Surat, Ahmedabad, Rajkot). In some places his opinion differs from the one given here, but that is in respect of details, where he says that in the introductory portion of his review on Kanta, he begins bravely and then at once collapses; in the main conclusion he does not differ. He was all his life a student, he studied English, Sanskrit and Hindi works, on literature and philosophy even in his advanced age, and he, no doubt, must have received great assistance in this branch of his writings from that study¹

The inevitable result of prose being thus cultivated was variety in style. While Narmadashankar, Dalpatram and Navalram in his earlier work, wrote a language which like that of the pioneers, the authors of the Hope Gujarati school reading.

¹ As a specimen of his English writing the following opinion on Dalpatram when he saw him at Ahmedabad would prove interesting

"He seems to be a man devoid of lively imagination or deep reflection. He talks on literature, but betrays no mark of sound education. His physiognomy is of a collected self satisfied with a slight suppressed humour. His intelligence is rather below the common level, but it is clear as far as it goes. The only poetic element on his face is a roguish humour. The education he has received from the world has perhaps dwarfed this natural power of his mind and rendered him a heavy companion and a prosy humourist. Some electric shocks will do him good, I believe. He is quite the converse of Narmad. No wonder they cannot agree. One is a type of cold formalism, while the other personates the dancing egotism of a youth "

series, was simple, direct and such as could be understood by the ordinarily educated people, those who followed them, slowly but steadily progressed towards a more difficult, because a Sanskritised style, which alienated a large mass of readers from them. Parsis found it quite impossible to keep up with the rapid strides that the new fashion was making, and they ultimately gave up the attempt to keep in line with it, thereby causing a complete cleavage. Prose written by Hindus came to be dubbed Hindu Gujarati, and that written by Parsis, Parsi Gujarati, and to this day mutual ridicule and recriminations are being indulged in, each side accusing the other of having spoiled the language. Our Parsi brethren are right in so far as it cannot be gainsaid that the present Hindu writers have strayed far from the simplicity of the earlier writers, and have loaded their language with a lavish use of words of Sanskrit origin. It is like the beautiful Anglo Saxon style of the earlier English writers giving place to the Latinised pompousness of Johnson. On the other hand, the Parsis have erred just as egregiously. One could have excused them if they had stuck to their Persian like prose, as was the fashion of their early writers, for Persian was to them what Sanskrit was to the Hindus, the mainspring from which they drew their supply and their inspiration. But close contact with the English language made them forget their early associations and they now write a style which is a hybrid, a mixture of Gujarati and English. There are, however, exceptions. There are Parsi authors who approach in their style their Hindu friends, and their endeavours to get rid of the undesirable element that has invaded the writings of their coreligionists are laudable.

Various styles
in prose-writing

Parsi style

Graduates with University degrees, who had had occasion to read and study Sanskrit works, necessarily gravitated towards a style, which gave preponderance to pure Sanskrit words, as well as to those of Sanskrit origin. They said that they found it difficult to get apt words and phrases in the indigenous vernacular for the expression of their cultured thought. The vernacular understood by the masses was felt to be an inadequate vehicle for conveying their ideas, which took rise from the higher study of Western languages and literature, so that authors in the front rank like Chhaganlal Pandya, the translator of the *Kadambari*, the late Prof. Manilal Divedi, the author of *Kanta*, and the late Mr. Govardhanram Tripathi, the author of *Sarasvatichandra*, began to press into their service words and phrases from Sanskrit, which entirely distinguished their language from that of their predecessors. The high priest, however, of this cult of Sanskritising Gujarati was the late Mr. Manasukhram S. Tripathi. He was not a College educated man, but he was of opinion that Gujarati being a daughter of Sanskrit, should approximate her to the utmost extent, so that barring a few grammatical and syntactical forms necessary to keep up the appearance of the language being Gujarati his style is entirely obsessed by a load of Sanskrit words, phrases and forms, which make his writings difficult reading to the uninitiated. He held that no foreign or alien element should remain in the language, and maintained that by assuming a Sanskritic form it would be more easily understood by Indians living outside Gujarat and speaking languages which were the descendants of Sanskrit, such as Bengali,

Prose laden
with Sanskrit
words

Hindi and Marathi. He has found few followers, his son is one of them¹

This tendency in the seventies and eighties had already assumed a proportion which alarmed Navalram into administering a sound whipping to those writers—the product of College education—who were looking down on their own vernacular and were inaugurating an era of writing Gujarati in an English style with a padding of Sanskrit words. Their writings were

neither one thing or the other. Ordinary people failed to understand them, as they were not conversant with Sanskrit. Shastri

Style unpopular

who had passed their whole life in studying Sanskrit, failed to follow them, as the syntax was English and the words though Sanskrit, were mere translations of English words, and thus detached from the significance or meaning ordinarily associated with them. The language which had served Samal so well which had enabled Dayaram to express the innermost feelings

1. The following passage illustrates both his views and his style

“રત્નાકર સસ્કૃત સમા એકજ જ્ઞાનિમાથી આવેલા સાર્થક સરલ શબ્દો શુદ્ધ વપરાઈ એકતા વર્ધમાના થશે. એમ થયે વિભક્તિના રૂપના અને ઘાતુના પ્રત્યયો- માંજ માત્ર ભેદ રહેશે. મળિની ભાષાઓ પરસ્પર સમજાય એવી થશે અને તે દેવ નામની કિંવા વાલ્ક્યોધ લિપિમા મુદ્રાવિત થશે તેથી મરતલ્લડની એકજનતા એક્ય-દેશજનતા ચલમા સુગમ થશે.” p 42 સાઠીનુ સાહિત્ય. His son goes even further

“જ્યારે ગજરાતીની બે મોટી સહોદરા ભાષાઓ—હિંદી તથા મરાઠીના પ્રયોગજ વાલ્ક્યોધ લિપિમા મુદ્રાપિતા થાય છે, ત્યારે એ બંને સહોદરા ભાષામા સ્વરૂપ પ્રાણ સમાન છે અને વિભક્ત્યાદિ અગોમા ભેદ છતાં તેઓનો કૌટુબિક સ્વરૂપ હૃદયમાન અને અનુમત છે ત્યારે—લિપિરૂપ વૈધર્મ્ય જે નિરક્ષરોદ્વારા અલ્પકાર્યથી પ્રવિટ્ થયુ છે તેને દૂર કરી મૂલાગત નિકટ સ્વધિત્વ પ્રકાશવુ એજ સાક્ષરોને ઘટિત છે p 166, Ibid

of the human heart so wonderfully, was found imperfect and inadequate for their purpose by the new graduates ¹

Navalram cites a very happy instance where in spite of the use of Sanskrit words, the style does not jar upon the ordinary reader. The prose portions of the Ishwar Prarthana Mala of Rao Bahadur Bholanath Sarabhai are all that could be desired

Bholanath's
prose a happy
medium

There is not an alien word in them there are very few indigenous words or words of "vulgar" origin, and still the result is a beautiful and cultured prose style, the product of a matured

pen and appealing straight to the heart of the reader. It is fully in keeping with the grandeur of the subject it is meant to expound : thoughts on the divinity of God and His mercifulness, the helplessness and humility of His creatures are clothed in words which, so far as their appositeness and propriety go are not approached by other writers ²

¹ His whole essay at p 246 of Navalgranthavali (Vol 11) on this subject *મસ્કૂતમયગુજરાતી*, is a very sane exposition of the situation created by those writers. He uncompromisingly condemns attempts to coin words from Sanskrit for articles of every day use such as a chair or a table. It is ridiculous to call the one a *દિહસ્તવનુષ્ઠાદસપીટાસન* and the other a *સેલિની નૂત્યાલય* and oust the simple equivalents *ચુરાઈ* and *મેજ* because they are alien (Persian) in origin

² For instance the following passage though full of Sanskrit words does not give one any extra trouble to understand it

જગતની રચના તથા તેની નિયમપૂર્વક યોજના તારા ઉપદ્યારનું રમણ કરાવે છે તથા હલ્લાહપૂર્વક તારી સ્તુતિ કરાવે છે. દે વિશ્વમર વિશ્વનાથ ! તુ સર્વ ધૈતન્યોનુ ધૈતન્ય છે, તુ માફ સરહળ કરે છે, માફ સર્વ ઉપજાવિન તારે હાથ છે હું હુપાતુર થાક છું ત્યારે તુ મને અન્ન પાન આપીને વિશ્રાંતિ આપે છે વિપત્તિ તથા દુઃસ મારે માથે પડે છે ત્યારે મારા નેત્રમા આશુ

As a protest against this elevation of prose by its Sanskritization, an author with his literary reputation going far back into the period of the rise of Gujarati literature on modern lines, Rao Bahadur Hargovandas D. Kantawala, sought to inaugurate a style in which vernacular or "vulgar" words should predominate. He desired that the village or the hamlet should rule and not the town or the city.

In his preface to a work of fiction¹ meant to expose, in the vein of ridicule, the unhealthy practices and intrigues of Native States, Rao Bahadur Kantawala advocates the cause of the lan-

भरेला जोई जेम पिता पुत्रस्नेहयी पोताना वालकोनुं आश्वासन करे छे ते प्रमाणे तु मारा नेत्रनां आंसु तारा दयाळु हाथयी जोहीने मारा मननुं समाधान करे छे."

ईश्वर प्रार्थनामाला, अंक १० मो.

The later sections of the book however bear distinct traces of another hand. The son supplemented the work of the father, but could not preserve his simple style. વર્ણારૂપી મૂર્તિને "સાવધાન !" એમ મૃદુ પળ ઉપાલંભયુક્ત વચન બોલતી સામઝી, હું અવાનક પાપના ગંભીર ગર્તમાં પડતે પડતે અટક્યો છું. સુંદર અને સુગંધમય વુમ્મિત સ્તાયી ઢંકાયલા મલિન દુર્ગંધમય અંધકૂપના મુલપરથી એ કુસુમ લેવાને અર્થે એક પગ તટપર મૂકી બીજો પગ અલક્ષિત કૂપના મુલમાં મૂકવા તટપર થયેલા મનુષ્યનો સહસા પાછળથી આવી કોઈ હાથ લેંચી લે તો તેના હૃદયમાં વ્યર્થ સ્થિતિ જાણતા જે માવસંચલન થતું હશે, તેવુંજ પળ તેથી સહસ્રગુણ માવસંચલન મારા સહસા સ્પ્રિદ્ર થયેલા આત્મામાં તે યેલા થયું છે."

ईश्वर प्रार्थनामाला, अंक २९ मो.

1 અંધેરી નગરીનો ગર્ધવસેન—એક ઈટલિયન વાર્તા.

guage used by the villager In order to augment the vocabulary he thinks it is advisable to press into our service the mannerisms of the different districts of our province, to requisition the language of domestic conversation Fortunately, this other extreme has not been reached at any time and the want of culture of the villager or the conversational language of the unlettered householder or the domestic have not, in spite of the above mentioned advice been allowed to adulterate the style of any other writer In many places the writer himself has had to abandon his opinion and break out into the easy, pure and correct style ordinarily written by him

The prose written by Rao Sahab Mahapatram Rupram a voluminous writer is as simple and easy as that of Dalpatram It is certain that it is not classical It may be that it was affected by or was the result of his long contact with students in the Training College whom he had to prepare as teachers of primary schools and hence it never rose even to the slightest heights of beautiful metaphor or striking simile It remained as unimaginative and flat as the matter-of fact and practical individuality of the writer Its even tenor however was never broken by anything mean or vulgar It always maintained the same dead level whether it described incidents in the lives of such powerful monarchs as Siddharaj Jayasinh of Gujarat or the Emperor Akbar of Delhi or such domestic events as the funny or tragic squabbles of a Hindu mother in law and her daughter in law ¹

¹ સાવુરદ્વના જન્મ

The prose of the journalist and the magazine writer necessarily follows the above lines. Weeklies or dailies conducted by Parsis, specially in Bombay, write in a peculiar style which has come to be known as Bombay Gujarati¹. Similarly the magazines edited by Hindus and Parsis maintain the same line of cleavage though here and there attempts are made by Parsis to assimilate the style of the Hindus by inviting the co-operation of, and contributions from, well known Hindu writers. Amongst the Hindu writers themselves the simple and easy style of the *Buddhi Prakash* and its contemporaries has entirely been replaced by the Sanskritized style of the *Sudarshana* and the *Vasanta*. There appear to be no signs at present of reverting to the earlier style. With the advance of school and College education it is not probable that writers would now care to look backwards, except in cases where magazines are published for women or children.

Before advertg to the part played by Parsi writers of prose for their own kith and kin, it would be as well to notice the common feature of the two styles, and that is its anglicization. The one sided attention paid to the learning of English in school and College banished for a long time the love of the student for his vernacular. He began to think in English, and consequently when he attempted to put his thoughts on paper he naturally expressed them in a style which was English in every thing except its appearance. English phrases and expressions were vernacularised wholesale. They failed to

1 मुंबईगरी गुजराती. The tendency had begun to manifest itself in the time of Kavi Hurchand who gave it this name. P 252 of the *Naval granthavalī* Vol 11

convey any significance to those who did not know English. Thus change has worked itself so deeply into the style of the Parsi that it has become thoroughly anglicised. To translate a Gujarati passage written by a Parsi especially a passage from a work of fiction into English is ridiculously easy. You have only to substitute English equivalents for Gujarati words and you produce a passage in English literally correct.¹

Prose written by Parsis is large in volume. Numerically though the community is smaller than the Hindu community it does not fall below it in the number of books it has written and is still writing. In this sense, therefore, they have contributed a very substantial quota to the literary activity of their adopted country. Their spirit of adventure and their spirit of generosity have benefited Gujarati literature and one can never forget their services in the past although of late many of them proclaim their readiness to cast off the tow line and sail away on the strength of their own sails.

Parsi prose naturally divides itself into four sections

1 Those who wrote under the influence of the old Persian style

2 Those, who wrote and still write a correct style unimpressed by foreign influences thus resembling the work of their best Hindu brethren

Four sections

1 For instance they would call dry rot મુકમડા which conveys no meaning in Gujarati. Both grammar and idiom have felt the change. Very few people now use the correct expression મસારા વિધાન—they use instead માણસો વિધાન—which is clearly a translation of confidence in me. Similarly પરમખરના માનફો for believe in God the correct expression being પરમખરને માનવો. This tendency has permeated the whole language and considerably changed its face.

3 Those who although not falling under the influence of Persian, still fell under the influence of English but nevertheless struggle honestly to keep as near as possible to the style of (2) ¹

I A few instances of the style would make the meaning clear

(a) “हरएक वावदयी नीपनता गमना इगारनी भद्रीमा कवाचनी मीसाले मुजाता दील ऊपर ठंडा पाणीना छत्काव करवामा अने बेसबरीना बीयावानमाना मुरदागेना सरद अने सीहा थाएला मीजाजने गरमीना शोलायी तेजी अने जहमेदार करवाना काममा सखून काम आवे छे ”

The passage is taken from Mansukh's *Ganj Nameh*. The class of these writers is now extinct and the style has gone out of fashion

(b) “पारसीओए गुजराती भाषा माटे घणु कर्तु छे तेओए गुजराती साहित्यनी उन्नतिमां सारो भाग लीधो छे वार्ता कथा उपरात ऐतिहासिक अने नैतिक विषयो उपर काईक ध्यान आप्यु छे ”

This passage is taken from an article written by Mr G. H. Narman a Parsi linguist and it is difficult to distinguish it from the style of a Hindu. There are many writers of this class too men like B. R. Bal the late B. M. Malabari Khan Bahadur J. A. Dalal Mr Sanjana Mr Jehangir Taleyarkhan Mr Pestonji Satha, and others. Their ranks however show very few recruits

(c) “वाचकद्वन्द्वे खोनी जोडणी अने खोटा उच्चारणी भूलमा पडता अटकायवानी लेखकोनी फेन छे, अने तेटलामाटे इंग्रेजी के फार्सी के बीजी परभाषाना विशेषनामो या शब्दो वापरती वेळा तेमना ते भाषामा थता उच्चार सरा होय तेज लेखवा जोईए ”

This passage typifies the style of the third class and it includes writers like R. N. Munshi Palanji B. Desai (from whose writings the quotation is taken) Sorabji M. Desai and many others. It cannot be said that there is any increase noticeable in their ranks though it is feared that depletion cannot be long delayed

4 Those who write under the out-and-out influence of English

If this tendency continues—and it is bound to continue so long as the vernacular of the province is not the medium of education it will certainly change the genius of the language. Superimposition of the tendency to think in English, write in English, speak in English on the extremely meagre layer of knowledge acquired in Gujarati primary schools for a short period of four or five years would have the inevitable result of crushing out that thin smattering of Gujarati and English would dominate Gujarati. Happily there are signs of an awakening and a cry is being raised for making the vernaculars the media of instruction and thus lead to their development.

(d) “જ્યારે એક જપ મદના પૈસાને સારુ એક જયાન અને વૃદ્ધસુરત ઝોઝી પોતાનો ભોગ આપે છે, યા જ્યારે સેતાબનુ પૂછડું ધરાધનાર સઢાડ સપાસનો એક મર્દ કોઈ મોટા દલાની વારેસ બુધ્યા માથે લગનના ગાંઠપી જોટાય છે ત્યારે શક સેતાન ચી હસતો હશે ’

This passage is taken at random from a story contributed to a Parsi magazine (the *શનવર્ધક* August 1915). It is full of English turns of thought, English expressions and phrases. This class is on the increase and has in fact flooded the whole field of Parsi Gujarati literature with its words and stories. There is no disposition on the part of any one to check this tendency and it promises to flourish till it converts the present language into a new dialect.

CHAPTER IV

DRAMA

In old Gujarati literature there was nothing corresponding to the modern drama, neither plays intended for the stage nor written for the closet. Old Drama Representations of human actions however, which travesty undesirable social and domestic usages of the period with a view to securing their reformation have always in some shape or other formed a feature in the literary history of every civilized country. Greece had them and so had Rome. India also was no exception to the rule. The history of Sanskrit literature furnishes many such instances. In fact there are books written giving elaborate hints to the actor, to the architect erecting the stage and building a play house and to the writer of the drama as to how he should marshal the different रस (sentiments) and भाव (emotions) of his *dramatis personae*. But that was all in olden times. The stage, in the modern sense of the term came into existence in Gujarat only about fifty years ago. What the theatre does at present was done before by Man Bhat, Bha-vayas and Rasdharis. The functions of the Man Bhat, a reciter of Puranic and religious stories to large audiences in the open air at night in a square or a large street have already been described¹. The institution of the Man Bhat in Gujarat resembled greatly that of the Hardas Bova in the Deccan and both had the potentiality as well as the power

¹ Milestones in Gujarati Literature p 67

in them of impressing and influencing the masses. The Rāsdhārī was an importation from the North. He acted the main incidents in the life of Krishna. He was extremely popular with the Vaiṣṇava and a troupe of Rasdhārīs even now finds a warm welcome in Vaiṣṇava temples. The methods of the Rasdhārīs are amateurish, and their play crude. There was some attempt however, at dressing the actors in the costumes supposed to have been put on by Krishna, Rādhā and the other characters in the story. The Persian Passion Play, the Mystery Play of the early English period, and the Jatra of Bengal are the counterparts of this Rās. A similar institution depicting the lives of Rama, Lakshman, Sita and other characters in the Ramayana takes the place of Rās in Northern India and is known as the Ramalīlā. Travelling troupes of Ramalīlā players are met with all over India, and it is not rarely that one finds them performing in Gujarat or Bombay. The audience both in the Rāshlīlā and the Ramalīlā pay no entrance fee, but at the close of the Līlā (play) which takes several days to finish each one pays his mite.

An institution however, which is almost indigenous and probably older than all these is the Bhavay. It is an amalgam of drama, farce, skit, satire and every possible representation of human action and emotion. It is played by a special caste or community of actors who are called Bhavayās or Targālās. Its distinguishing features are gross vulgarity, open indecency, public obscenity now and then tempered by some home truths. It probably owes its origin to the sinister side of the cult of the Devī (द्यानमત્ત) which rejoices in the drinking of wine, eating of flesh, using of foul language and deriving pleasure from lewdness. The caste of the Bhavayās considers it their here-

ditary function to perform Bhavaas before the goddesses Bahu chraji and Ambaji and if they fail to do so on particular days, they are afraid of the goddesses' wrath. The subject matters, of a Bhavaa's plays were various, but the underlying idea was to ridicule or parody the social usages of this community or the domestic life of that family¹. They know good music, but their besetting sin was their foul language and still fouler gestures while acting. Their costumes were entirely crude, and their make up primitive. In order, for example, to represent a character with a bulging stomach they would lash a big earthen chatty or a swollen leather bag used for carrying glue² to the stomach, or to represent fat or heavy hips they would stuff them up with a piece of mattress. Coarse wit, and vulgar phrases produced screams of laughter from their audiences, which were mixed and generally as illiterate as the actors and who patiently underwent the ordeal of sitting out the performance from early evening to the early morning of the next day. Bhavaas have now entirely gone out of fashion and survive only in remote villages, from where they are also being gradually banished, their place being supplied by travelling theatrical companies and Cinema shows. A very laudable attempt was made by the late Rao Saheb Mahapatra Rupram to reform this institution by eliminating from it gross obscenities. His book called a collection of Bhavaas (भवार्थसमूह) contains none of the objectionable features of a Bhavaa performance. Shorn of their vulgarities and coarseness they present quite an enjoyable picture of the

¹ भीया बीवीनो वेश, होरानो वेश, कजोडाँनो वेश, travestyng the home life of a Musalman and his wife, or a Dori or an ill matched pair juvenile husband and elderly wife, etc

² घीनुं कुपु.

idiosyncracies and peculiarities of the different communities as well as of the incidents they are intended to portray.¹

1. Bhavaas and Mahapatram's attempts to reform them have been well described in *સાહિત્ય સાહિત્ય* pp. 110-111.

Each troupe had a hereditary right to play in a particular locality and beg of a particular caste. No stage was required for Bhavaas. A street, a road, a Dharamshala or a temple was enough for the performance. A tattered piece of cloth or an old carpet served for a curtain. Those who had performed their parts disappeared behind it, new actors taking their place. They used to put on any sort of dresses and ornaments, big or small, what they could get. To look fair they applied chalk or yellow pigment (orpiment) to their faces. Torches furnished their light. Resin was set fire to and its flames furnished the miraculous element at the appearance of the actor. Coarse language and unseemly gestures were the main features of the play. Their special dance was like the dance of the Egyptians, full of obscene suggestions. They commenced their play with the presentation of Ganesh, the auspicious god, whose trunk was represented by a thick round bundle of clothes or paper, the sight of which excited laughter. Different scenes succeeded this scene in order. In every scene the principal character or hero came invariably accompanied by *મિલો* (the clown or jester). It was his duty to make the audience laugh by coarse allusions, shameless jests, and obscene gestures. There was no written book of these plays, and the actors prepared their parts by word of mouth. very rarely some actor committed his part to paper in characters which he alone could decipher. It was in Rao Sahib Mahapatram's nature to seek to reform every existing institution, and he felt the need of preserving the Bhavaas, though fully alive to its impropriety as played then. Therefore his efforts were directed towards removing their objectionable elements and weaning the actors away from the use of filthy language. He wrote a book, the *મહાદેવ સંપદ* to teach their profession to the youth of this caste, just to see that this old mode of merriment might not perish. The language of the actors was mixed Gujarati and Hindi, with a further admixture of Musalmani and Marwadi words. He spent his own money, gathered together the Bhavayas and wrote this book, but his good intentions bore no fruit, and the drama did not improve.

The transition from the Bhavai to the modern stage which is, like many other phases of Indian life an imitation of the English stage is traceable to the influence of the Dakshani or Marathi Natak Mandalis (Theatrical Companies) which began to visit Gujarat almost three generations ago in the later sixties and early seventies of the last century. The Karloskar the Sangalakar and Rambhau's Natak Mandalis were very popular in Gujarat in those days.

There were some features in them resembling those of the Bhavaya too as they always opened their plays with the Ganapati scene the god wearing a paper proboscis. The Sarasvati jumped on to the stage through flames of resin seemingly riding a peacock with face of the bird made of wood in front and sheaves of its feathers on her back the actor's own legs serving as those of the bird. In Gujarat the prose parts were spoken in Hindustani instead of in Marathi while the songs were recited in the original language. A permanent actor in the shape of a Sutradhar or director remained on the stage throughout the play and curiously enough he took the place of the particular actor whose part it was to sing any song. Ascetic Arjun would thus declare his love in song to Subhadra through the Sutradhar who besides furnishing vocal music cymbals in hand joined the orchestra. Subhadra reciprocated her love through the same medium!

The Parsi community in Bombay took the lead however in creating the modern stage and for several years their Natak Mandalis such as Cooper's Nazirs and the Natak Uttejak Mandal held the field. They spent large amounts in providing realistic scenes and effective scenery. Well known Parsi authors like

Kabiraj and Hindu writers like Ranchhodbhai wrote for them, and they in their turn encouraged them and other authors by calling upon them to write for them suitable plays. Many of their plays were played in Urdu, which sounded better in the mouth of a Parsi actor than his habitually faulty Gujarati. The language was beautiful and virile, the songs full of music. Many of Shakespeare's plays were thus dramatised and also some Gujarati plays like the Harischandra of Ranchhodbhai Udayaram Bahwala's and Khatau's Companies still further improved upon the pioneers' work and one of them travelled even to England. The use of Urdu gave them a great advantage, and they continued to attract large audiences in all parts of India and Burma. Gujaratis followed the lead given by Parsis and the Gujarati, the Morvi, the Deshi, the Vankaner and some other Mandalis which still continue to cater for the theatre-going public, have firmly established themselves. They travel into the districts, and give tone to the provincial troupes.

It is not the province of this book to describe the excellences and deficiencies of the theatre of to-day in Bombay or in the districts. But Defects in present theatres numerous theatre-goers have deplored the low level to which the stage has sunk, and the cultured amongst them are trying to purify it. But their efforts do not suit the proprietors, as the latter apprehend that such purification would scare away the pit and the gallery and affect their purse. The future therefore does not look very bright¹

¹ Amongst the numerous writings on this subject the reader would do well to refer to Krishnarao B. Divatia's paper on નાટકો અને રમણી published in the Report of the first Gujarati Sahitya Parishad. Narsinhrao B. Divatia's paper on અભિનયકલા in the Report of the second Sahitya Parishad and to page 113 of માટેનું સાહિત્ય.

Proprietors have to pander to the taste of the audience, and if the audience craves for depravities proprietors provide them.

The earliest drama written in Gujarati is the *Lakshmi Natak* (1851) by Kavi Dalpatram. It is based on an English translation of *Plutus*, an allegory by the famous Greek comic poet, Aristophanes. Its object is to demonstrate that wealth can be acquired by goodness and lost by evil that virtuous men are happy and the vicious unhappy. The whole drama is in prose, excepting for a single song sung by the Jester (રગજો). There are several inconsistencies in the play, incidental to the translation of Greek ideas into Gujarati. In Indian mythology there is a goddess of wealth and not a god as in the Greek mythology. Further this goddess is said to be very fickle, transferring her favours from one individual to another at short intervals, while the Greek god *Plutus* is depicted to have been blind so that he might make his gifts without discrimination. In order to keep up the plot of the original Dalpatram had therefore to disregard this conventional idea of *Lakshmi* and to depict her blind, which disability had ultimately to be cured by *Dhanvantri*, the famous Physician. Otherwise the play has carried out its object well and is full of moral precepts. Although it has been forgotten now, it was well received when it was published and ran through four editions.

The real credit however, of creating dramatic literature in Gujarati belongs to Ranchhodbhai Udayaram. We have already noticed his joint contribution to the enriching of it by translations of Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare* but his ambition went further. He wanted indigenous productions, and in 1861 he set about supplying the want by

Ranchhodbhai,
creator of dra-
matic literature

writing his *Jaya Kumari Vijaya Natak* which was published in the *Buddhi Prakash* in several instalments (1862). It came out in book form in 1865. Disgust at Bhava's led him to think of writing original plays such as would interest ordinary people to whom Sanskrit plays original and translated were a sealed book. He has not strictly followed Sanskrit model, and his play lacks natural evolution and regular development. Instead of the original idea proceeding to its final development in a gradual or natural course we find in this play a story told in prose in the shape of dialogues between the different characters. There are poetical passages here and there but the plot is developed more as a story than as a play. *Jaya Kumari* the heroine is an educated girl belonging to an indigent family, while *Pranlal* the hero is a cultured youth belonging to a wealthy family. He is attracted towards her by her virtues and in spite of great difficulties succeeds in winning her hand. This was the burden of the play. It not

only stamped him as an original author but it also moulded for a long time the shape of subsequent plays in Gujarati. His successors imitated him in ultimately marrying and thereby making happy their love-distracted hero and heroine far apart in social status and hence subjected to many difficulties in the attainment of their object. In fact many of the later plays rang changes only on the variety of the difficulties and the ordeals the couple had to pass through the main object remaining one and the same namely their marriage. Thus he led and others followed and they did so blindly. They copied his mistakes too¹

¹ L. g. In the introductory scene where the clown entering after the *Sutradhar* asks him foolish questions about the objects and motive of the play. This misplaced jocularity wrongly called humour mars the dignity and solemnity of the opening scene as it resembles the unedifying exhibit of the clown (વગા) of the Bhava.

Ranchhodbhai's fame as a dramatist rests, however, on his other play called the *Lalita Dukh Darshak Natak* (1866). It is a tragedy, in which his heroine succumbs to the tyranny of the Hindu society. Her parents in selecting her spouse had only looked to the so called nobility of his family and not to his other qualities. He turned out to be a heartless spendthrift and a debauchee, he was illiterate and he had no feeling for his accomplished wife, Lalita, and was a complete slave of his mistress Priyamvada. His mother and sister were quarrelsome women, and never happy unless when they had caused a woman with Lalita's highly strung nature utterly to break down. Her death was the result. The picture drawn by Ranchhodbhai of the domestic life of such a family, typifying that of a majority of his countrymen, drew immense crowds when put on the stage. The person who represented Lalita was much admired and the name of her husband Nandankumar shortened into Nandan became a byword for idiocy and low morals. Ranchhodbhai had departed from the rule of Sanskrit plays which do not end in tragedy, and here too he had his imitators. This play for a long time undoubtedly exercised great influence over the social morals of the Gujaratis. Viewed from a purely literary point it would be found that it repeats the error of long prose dialogues and sermons, and adds to it by equally long poetical passages. But the language being simple the sentiments very human, the incidents the every-day incidents in the domestic life of a Hindu, it appealed powerfully both to readers and spectators in spite of the unnatural turn of events in several places, and the improbability of the rapid translations of Lalita from one set of miseries into another. The laudable purpose with which Ranchhodbhai had turned his

attention towards the region of drama was fulfilled, and many a Hindu wife and husband after reading or witnessing the play of Lalita must have paused to think over her fate before consigning their daughter to the household of prospective Karkashas and Kajiabais¹ The play has gone out of vogue, but the older generation still remembers the immense good it did in its time.

Ranchhodbhai started with the principle that the dramatist should not stoop to cater for the taste of the vulgar and write for the gallery or the pit; he should write rather in a way which would lift them up to his high ideal. He adhered to it all throughout his career as a dramatic author Others could not keep to it, and the result was that this branch of literature did not attain a high level.

It is as well to mention that Ranchhodbhai's contribution to the early dramatic literature is a large one. What with translations from English and Sanskrit, dramatisation of Puranic subjects and original compositions, he has written nearly twelve plays² In addition, he has also written on the art and science of drama, where he has indulged in some criticism also of those who had preceded him in this branch³

¹ Mrs Shrew and Mrs Quarrelsome, who were respectively the mother and sister-in-law of Lalita, and who would not let her have a moment's rest.

² (૧) જયકુમારી વિજય નાટક (૨) લલિતાદુઃખદર્શક નાટક (૩) નરક દમયંતી નાટક (૪) હરિચંદ્ર નાટક (૫) તારામતી સ્વયંવર (૬) માલવિકાગ્નિમિત્ર નાટક (૭) પ્રેમરાય અને ચાસ્મતી (૮) શાળામૂર મદમર્દન (૯) મદાલમા અને ચતુષ્પત્ત નાટક (૧૦) ગોપાલદાસ (૧૧) વિક્રમોર્વશી નાટક.

³ This book is called નાટ્યવિજ્ઞાન in Gujarati, for instance he has criticised Dalpatram's Lakshmi Nr...

Prof Manlal Nabhubhai Dvivedi B A, was a sound Sanskrit scholar, and the services rendered by his pen by the admirable translation of Sanskrit plays would be noticed later. But his original work *Kanta* (1884) deserves to be mentioned here. In portraying human nature, in laying down his plot and in poetising the whole subject of his play, Manlal has displayed scholarship of no mean order. His fine intellectual attainments are seen in the breadth of his imagination, in the heights to which the ideals of his *dramatis personae* soar, in the objectiveness of his poetical passages, in the portrayal of nature and her charms and in the vivid

Prof Manlal a
Kanta descriptions of the many interesting situations in it. It was a bold and a unique performance, and shone like a gem when it was presented to the public. When it was staged in Bombay, it proved a great success, the warmth of the sentiments, aided by suitable theatrical "properties," kept the audience in a very happy mood from start to finish, and for several years *Kanta* played by the Gujarati Natak Mandali continued to be "the rage" in Bombay. After he wrote it he left off writing plays, and it was Gujarati Literature that felt the loss.

Many original plays have been written during this period, all with a commendable object but with little merit. Some have defeated their purpose by their length and tedious speeches. A typical instance is the *Vyabhichar Khandan Natak*¹ (a play written in censure of adultery). Adultery amongst various classes and communities, at various places, on various occasions and in various creeds is depicted in scenes of the broadest suggestiveness, and the end of several such scenes the author has wound up with grandiloquent homilies from the

¹ By Panachaud Amarji

mouth of a character called Jnan Suryangajā on the iniquity and wickedness of the vice, very few readers care to go through that part, the 'spicy' scenes are all that they care to enjoy and the result is failure in the object aimed at. Another such play is the Madyapān Dukhadarśhak Chandra Mukhi Natak. It has been written with a view to depict the evils of drinking and intemperance. It seeks to appeal to the better nature

of man by shewing the sufferings of the heroine, Chandra Mukhi, the wife of a drunkard. But the whole play is so overloaded with disgusting scenes of the pot house and the drinking bar that its commendable object takes quite a back seat. This is where it fails. Inordinately long speeches, pulpit-like sermons and grandmotherly advice are a common feature of such plays, very little is left to imagination, or even to suggestion.

There are many plays, which have not secured any abiding place in the mind of the public though not devoid of merit because written by men of acknowledged gifts like Kavi Narmadashankar and Harilal H. Dhruva.¹

1. The Nrasinh Natak of Kṛo Saheb Madhuvachram Vora the several plays of Kavi Narmadashankar e.g. the Draupadi Darshan (1878) the Rama Janaki Darshan the Balkrishna Vijaya (1886)* the Vikramodaya and the Aryotkarsha of Harilal H. Dhruva the Vaidēhi Vijayam of Maganbhai Chaturbhai Patel † the Hajoda Dukh Darshan (a play to illustrate the miseries of an ill matched couple) of Keshavlal M. Parikh The Shishupala Vadh or Rekmini Haran of Nagindas P. Singhavi ‡

* Navilram's apt remark about these productions is that these plays conform to the object with which they were written (viz, bread winning) and hence do not add to the fame of the poet.

† The writer of *मर्दनु साहित्य* opines that the treatment of Rama in this play is so unnatural that instead of confirming him in the high estimation in which we hold him for his purity of life and saintliness it brings him down considerably.

‡ The same author considers this play to be one of the very few good plays in the language.

Of historical plays there is a paucity in Gujarati literature. The Pratap Natak of Kavi Ganpatram which has passed through four editions, though wanting in many respects deserves mention only because it rescues the literature from the stigma of possessing no historical dramatic conscience. The adventures of Rana Pratap, the vicissitudes of his life, the unique courage and valour of that Rajput monarch, all these have been ably poetised by the pen of Tod. Compared to Tod's handling of this subject, Ganpatram's feeble attempt to portray Pratap resembles a tiny star twinkling on a full moon night. Another such play is the Viramati Natak of Navalram (1869), Jagadeva the prince of Malva belonging to the famous Parmar clan of the Rajputs, is his hero. The tragic moments of his life, when he has to part with his last weapon and pledge it to procure food for himself and his mare and his courageous deeds, furnish the author with apt occasions for penning fine speeches and songs. But taken as a whole it is not one of his best works.¹

Amongst minor plays, there is one which has earned its meed of praise. The Shravan Pitri Bhakti Natak (the play which describes the filial devotion of Shravan), by Bhogilal Mahanand

¹ It is a great pity that more attempts have not been made in this patriotic direction. The indigenous historical literature of Gujarat and Kathiawad furnishes numerous stirring episodes in the lives of their kings and queens which lend themselves easily to dramatisation. The larger field opened out by Indian history, specially Rajput history has hardly been touched. Parsis on the other hand at least in the early seventies concentrated all their efforts on the dramatisation of many well known events in the history of Iran.

Bhat, is based on one of the noblest episodes in our Puranic books. The one aim in life of this poor Brahmin boy was to serve his parents. In order to bring out in greater relief the hardships, mental and physical, suffered by Shravan in carrying out the slightest of their wishes, his parents have been drawn here as physically infirm, unable to move by themselves, blind and mentally like children. Shravan ignores even the claims of his wife, whom he treats harshly, provided it pleases his aged and infirm parents. The pathetic story of his carrying them on baskets slung on a pole resting on his shoulder from place to place of pilgrimage, and of his being killed by an arrow of King Dasharath while taking water from a river to his thirsty parents, being mistaken for an elephant, and of their cursing the great King on being told what had happened, that he too would die like them on account of the bereavement of his son, has been often told. The son's devotion was rewarded with a place in heaven. The language and the setting of the various scenes are full of life, and its lesson is conveyed in the easiest of ways.

Like the above, several other Puranic and mythological subjects have been requisitioned by writers Puranic plays for the purposes of the drama. The capture of Rukmini or the destruction of Shishupala's pride by Krishna, the Shishupala Mada Mardana, has been utilized to good purpose by Mr. Nagindas Purshotamdas Sanghavi, a writer of merit and some distinction. It is not unalike to following the rules of the Sanskrit Natya Shastra, and is not a work that can be ignored. In the song

the delinquent's morals. The subject furnishes a great scope for the exercise of the writer's pen in various directions and the *Amara Satra*, though heavy reading furnishes in many places, humorous, light and bantering incidents.

There are two plays which require special notice as it is on account of them that this branch of Gujarati literature is saved the rebuke of being entirely devoid of humour. They are of unique merit, one of them though an original production is weak fibred compared to the other, which, though an adaptation, is so strong in presenting the element of native humour that one hardly suspects that it is based on a foreign play. The first is the *Mithyabhimān Natak* of Kavi Dalpatram and the second is *Bhat nūn Bhopalun* of Navalram (A. D. 1867).

Dalpatram's play¹ narrates the adventures of a night-blind Brahmin, who is at pains to conceal his defect from his friends and specially from his wife's relatives. This determination lands his hero Jivaram Bhatt by name into various difficulties and his ludicrous efforts to get out of them furnishes the humour of the situation. The humour, however is superficial and such as would please children though genuine it is not deep, it is quiet and not boisterous, but coarse as for instance when Jivaram Bhatt in taking his evening bath, is unable to distinguish between a pot of hot water and a pot containing buffalo's urine and when from the bitter saltish taste of the liquid realising his mistake tries to conceal it, by pleading that he had deliberately done so as his

¹ Written for a prize essay. The donor was so pleased with it that he gave him twice the amount advertised.

doctor had advised him to use it as a medicine to cure the itch on his skin. All his *dramatis personae* are bitten by the curse of vaingloriousness. *मिथ्याभिमान* if one prides himself on his learning, another does so on his noble family and a third on something else. The whole world, for instance, knew that Jivaram was night-blind and his efforts to conceal that obvious fact from others gave rise to laughable incidents, as he always came out with ridiculous excuses to ward off the suspicion of his suffering from such a defect. In spite of several drawbacks the drama can bear repeated reading, because of the simplicity and homeliness of the scenes presented by the author. The incidents are such as occur every day in the life of a Gujarati villager, and no effort is therefore required to appreciate or imagine them. Though one feels that in some respects the partition dividing it from the scenes of the old Bhavais is very thin, one cannot withhold hailing it as the first humorous drama in the language.

Navalram's Bhat nun Bhopalun is an inimitable adaptation of Fielding's translation (the Dumb Lady or the Mock Doctor) of Moliere's French drama, A doctor in spite of himself. The overflowing humour of the original has been translated into Gujarati without any diminution whatever. In fact Navalram has so well entered into the spirit of the original and grasped its beauties, that one feels that had Moliere or Fielding written in Gujarati they could not have improved upon Navalram. Unless one is expressly told that it is an adaptation, one could not find out that it was so, so well has the transformation been made of European customs, manners, mode of life and speech into those of Gujarat. Wherever it has not been possible to keep to European customs and manners, such as marriages of women at an advanced age, the author has modified or even altered them to suit the state of circumstances in Gujarat. There are many parents in

The other by
Navalram

our province who keep their daughters unmarried till an advanced age, in order to sell them to those in want at a high price, and this custom has been skilfully utilized by Navalram as a suitable substitute for the custom of marriage at an advanced age in Europe. The scene has been aptly laid in the Surat district, as Surat out of all places in Gujarat is the one place where humour, joviality, even frivolity prevail in all their attractive phases. The disputes between the principal actors Bhola Bhat and his wife, the language, the phrases, the proverbs used by them, their innuendos and their taunts are set down with such *naïveté* and skill, that very little is wanted to make the humour effective. The characters do not belong to a high class of society, one is a barber and the other a peon, but that has not made either their language or actions loud and vulgar. Indeed in the whole book it is difficult to find a single phrase or word out of place or introduced simply *pour rire*, to excite unnatural laughter. Even if Navalram had written nothing else this one book would have given him an abiding place and a place of honour in Gujarati literature. Keen as a sharpened razor, biting as the cold north wind, his humour always preserves a dignity, manifests a refinement, and radiates a subtlety, which are lacking in Dalpatram's work. He has been surpassed by only one writer in Gujarati and that is Rao Bahadur Ramanbhai Mahapatram Nilkanth who has overtaken him in both those branches of literature which were considered his *mei-er*, reviewing or criticism and humour.¹

¹ Havi Narmadashankar on reading this play was of opinion that Navalram did not know what humour meant. This was of course, a wrong estimate and when Navalram came to know of it he replied to the criticism in a detailed letter, an outline of which is published in his collected writings which treats the whole subject of wit and humour in a masterly way (see नयटप्रयायली भाग २, पृष्ठ १९)

A third play, translation from Marathi, made at the instance of the Gujarat Vernacular Society, is more or less a satire on the subject of widow remarriage ¹. It is a comedy and its humour is of an order superior to Dalpatram's

Another such comedy, based on a ludicrous but none the less regrettable social custom, is the play written by the late Keshavlal M. Parikh, to expose the evils in the married lives of unevenly matched couples 'कजोडा दुखदर्शक नाटक', the wife a child the husband a fully grown up man. The play does not possess high merit, and whatever little there is in it to recommend is marred by the antics of the clown or *विदुषक*, who turns up unceremoniously at the oddest of moments, for instance, in the bed room of the newly married couple. The extreme improbability of the presence of the clown at such moments and its unnaturalness spoils some otherwise decent situations. Parsis have cultivated this branch successfully, as will be noticed hereafter

Translations from Sanskrit, English, Bengali, Marathi and one or two other vernaculars have been made on a very large scale but a few of them possess sterling merit. In the case of some well known plays such as the *Shakuntala* of Kalidas or some of Shakespeare's works, more than one writer has tried his hand, and succeeded with varying merit

¹ पुनर्विवाह पक्षी पुरेपुरी, सोळे सोळे आना पजेती अथवा रुदि दिग्विजय, i.e., A complete collapse of the party advocating widow remarriage Mr. K. B. Divatia who has translated it and also written another play called *Bhranti Sansar* in his paper नाटको अने रंगभूमी (p. 12 Report of the first Gujarati Sahitya Parishad), cynically says that it is more a collapse of the opposite party than the one in favour of this kind of marriage

Kavi Narmadashankar's *Sar Shakuntala* is merely a modest attempt at adapting it for the Gujarati stage but the three other translations, those of the late Rao Saheb Dalpatram Pranjivan Khakhkhar, the late Javerlal Umiashankar Yajnik and Prof B K Thakore have held the field Rao Saheb Khakhkhar has not gone to the original Sanskrit text, but utilised a Marathi translation At best, therefore, the original text could be but loosely adhered to, and at times even the real significance of passages is lost or misunderstood As its language is simple and such that even common people can follow him, the translation has gone through a second edition, but since the time of its first publication the standard of education has changed and present day students have become more exacting to such readers, it does not make much appeal as they fail to see the master hand of the original in it It is the translation of a translation and hence inferior in value.

Almost simultaneously with Khakhkhar's translation appeared Javerlal's As he has relied on the Sanskrit text, he has been able to give to his translation the dignity, the simplicity and the gracefulness of the original Though not free from faults, it is much superior to his contemporary's and it too has run into a second edition

Of the three, Prof Thakore's translation most closely follows the text, and hence is the most accurate, it conveys the emotions and sentiments of the original more faithfully than the two others but, as happens at times with very close and literal translations, it becomes rigid and lifeless A slight deviation here and there may give grace to the style, a sacrifice of literalness to

the genus of the language in which the translation is being made may make the statement or the passage in the original understandable by the reader in the vernacular, and here it is where people would like to read Javerlal's translation in preference to the Professor's more scholarly and learned work. His attempt at rhymeless verse and consequent ignoring of the rules of prosody has formed the subject matter of a hot controversy¹ between him and the followers of the old school, but this is not the place to refer to such a technical dispute.

A fourth translation by another well known writer, Magan-
 By Patel bhai Chaturbhai Patel, has also been brought
 out

Yet another drama of Kalidas the Vikramorvasht
 Vikramorvasht Trotak, has drawn towards itself the trans-
 lating genius of three or four authors. More
 than half a century ago Ranchhodbhai translated it, though
 neither closely nor accurately. He made his own additions,
 and the text that he followed was incorrect.
 By Ranchod The translation has consequently suffered
 bhai and presents but a dim picture of the original.

However, the translation that followed it from the pen of
 the late Kilabhai Ghanashyam Bhatt was a much better one.
 For the first time it recognised the principle of finding out the
 correct text, and thus rendering the transla-
 By Kilabhai tion accurate. An attempt is made to present
 the poetry of Kalidas in the original metre, and altogether it
 shows a commendable and genuine effort on the part of the
 translator to convey the beauty of the original to the Gujarati
 reader.

¹ It was continued by him in the Introduction to a collection of his poems called भगवत्, The Echo (1917)

A third translation¹ of the same by Rao Bahadur Keshavlal Harshadrai Dhruva B A, under the nom de-plume of Vanamah, was published several years ago—and ran into three editions. His acknowledged scholarship, combined with the greater facilities he enjoyed for correction of faulty text, has resulted in adding a work to our literature which in every sense conveyed the inimitable grace and beauty of Kalidas' work into Gujarati so far as that is possible in a translation. Very few ordinarily educated Gujarati readers would endorse this opinion, because the scholarly translation would appear to them to be merely Sanskrit transposed into Gujarati characters, and they would be right in saying that rather than read such a transposition why not go to the fountainhead and there enjoy its beauty. Unfortunately it is so, but then it is so difficult to bring down higher Sanskrit to the level of vernaculars with limited capacities for expression.

Ranchhodbhai's indomitable energy gave one more translation to the language, the *Malvikagni Mitra* of Kalidas. Kilabhai also translated the *Parvati Pannaya* of Bana, and a very admirable translation it is, though he was hampered by the absence of a well-annotated text. Shortly before he died Kilabhai published a translation of one of Bhasa's plays. The introduction contributed by him to this translation in connection with Bhasa's life and work of which not much is known—shows signs of great assiduity, labour and acumen. Keshavlal Dhruva has also translated one play of Bhasa called

¹ In 1906 a translation *विहमोर्वशीय नाटक* was published by H G Anjaria M A LL.B. he there does not disclose the name of the translator, but it was made by Rao Bahadur K. H. Dhruva.

स्वप्न वासवदत्त, साचु स्वप्न (1916), the introduction of which is most valuable from an antiquarian's point of view.

Like Kalidas, Bhavabhuti has also attracted Gujarati scholars His *Malati Madhava* translated by Manilal Nabhu bhai is a very readable production. His other well known play, the *Uttara Ramacharitra*, has also been translated by Manilal The original is replete with various kinds of beauty of diction, of the arrangement of the personae, of the exhibition and expression of human emotions and feelings To translate him adequately into another language, and that also an admittedly inferior vernacular, was not an easy task. Manilal has succeeded very well in doing all this, and though prosodists may find a fault here and a defect there, on the whole even stern critics have had to acknowledge his ability. A portion of the play, the *Chitra Darshana*, has also been translated by Mr. Keshavlal, and it is a charming production.

Keshavlal Dhruva's translation of Vishakh Datta's *Mudra Rakshas* is another towering production. His annotations and efforts at collating the texts give the measure of his scholarship; but in doing so he often manufactures imaginary readings in a way not acceptable to sound scholarship There was another translation of it by a Kathiawadi gentleman, Mr Savailal Vora of Bhavnagar.

Besides these, there have been two translations of the *Prabodh Chandrodaya Natak* The *Veni Sanhar Natak*, the *Nagananda Natak*, the *Ratnavali*, *Priya Darshana* (by K H Dhruva, 1915) and *Mrichchha Katika* have also been translated

English plays have not attracted Gujarati scholars for purposes of translation so much as Sanskrit.

Translations of English Shakespeare, however, figures largely in whatever little has been done. Here too Ranchhodbhai Udayaram was the pioneer, and he led the others by introducing Shakespeare in the shape of a book, giving the substance of his plays. He called it the Shakespeare Katha Samaj. There have been isolated translations like those of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and *The Merchant of Venice*. There have also been adaptations, like those made by Professor Nimbheram Pranjivan of the Samaldas College Bhavnagar, of *The Comedy of Errors*, *Measure for Measure* and *All's Well that Ends Well*. He has translated *Julius Caesar* and *Othello*. An attempt here and there has been made by Parsi writers also at translations and adaptations of English plays, like Sheridan's *School for Scandal*,¹ but, on the whole, the attempts are fewer than those in connexion with Sanskrit or with the Indian vernaculars.

The introduction of Bengali plays to Gujarat dates from

And Bengali dramas Narayan Hemchandra's translation of "*Ashurumati*." It is a historical tragedy, and the original was written by that eminent Bengali scholar, Jyotirindra Tagore. Though nominally translated by Narayan, it has been touched up so skilfully, and especially in its verse portion, by the able and sympathetic pen of Narsinhrao Divadiya, that the credit of its being one of the best plays in Gujarati may be given to the latter. Farid and Prince Salim seem to be reflections of Iago and Othello, and it is thus at third hand that Gujarati is able to absorb the production of Shakespeare's genius. '*Puru Vikrama*' is another historical play translated from Bengali.

¹ Called *निन्दामञ्जरी* by Kaikhosru Navroji Kabraji.

"Sati Natak" translated by Narmadashankar Devshankar Mehta is really written in Bengali from which it was translated into Hindi and from there into Gujarati. It will specially commend itself to the followers of the Shaiva creed.

"Deval Devi," written in 1875, is one of the few original historical plays in the language. It is written by Bhimrao Bholanath Divatia, a member of that literary and gifted family of Ahmedabad which has given a Bholanath Sarabhai and a Narsinhrao Bholanath to Gujarat.

Translations from Marathi have already been alluded to and there have been a few more, Madhav Marathi dramas
rao Peshva the Great, being one of them

Amongst the few green places that relieve the bareness of good dramatic literature in Gujarati are Jaya and Jayant
Jaya and Javant of Kavi Nanalal Dalpatram and Rai no Parvat of Rao Bahadur Raman bhai Mahapatram Nilkanth. The first has made a great stir amongst the educated classes because of its novelty both in the subject matter of the play and the mode of writing, it. The subject is a startling one, he preaches life long spinsterhood for women an ideal which shocks a conservative and orthodox Hindu who has been nurtured on the tradition that to keep a woman unmarried is a sin even though the infringement of the social and religious command be accompanied with such a praiseworthy life as that of devotion to social service, service of the weak and the infirm. In fact, the ideal, beautiful in every respect, in thought and in its setting, is a revolt against the established custom of the coun-

try and as such "has set the Thames on fire." The other novelty is in the form in which the play is written. It is "metreless verse." it is prose written like poetry and printed in lines of varying length, an innovation equally, if not more startling than the one already referred to. Under the inspiration of the new school, Gujarati literature had gradually reconciled itself to departing from rhyming verses, both in respect of recognised prosodial metres and other kinds of poetry like ગરબી and છાંદસી. But this kind of poetry, where only the mode of reading the verses, the peculiar intonation assumed when reading them, (albeit-the contents might be gems of beautiful ideas such as can be set only in poetry, never in prose), made this poetry too much for the patience of the public, and protests have been showered against this bold innovator from quarters which carry weight and influence, and from scholars of acknowledged erudition and repute.¹

¹ Nanalal's poems, written in the orthodox fashion, have won a deserved niche in the temple of neo-Gujarati Literature by their sweetness, grace and music. Some of them melt in the mouth like the famous sweet of Bengal, the Rasa Golla. But his later departure, this metreless verse hobby,—has almost banished from his desk work cast in the earlier mould. To celebrate the Jubilee year of Mahatma Gandhi's life, he wrote a stately Ode on the lines of some famous Odes in English, though it resembles more the Kasidah of the Arabs and the Persians, called ગુજરાતનો તપસ્વી, The Anchorite of Gujarat. A parody of it, called, પંખાતનો તપસ્વી, the Anchorite of the Morn (viz., a Cock) is written under an assumed name, Motlal (the great 'Lal' as opposed to Nanalal—the small 'Lal'. It is a play on the word Nanalal). In stateliness of language, clear expression of ideas and exposition of prosodial ideals, it is a fine piece of poetical work, with just the proper flavour of ridicule and satire; the writer who has not yet been openly identified, seeks to wean him away from the new and unexplored paths and appeals openly to—almost supplicates—him not to mar his splendid and magnificent future by merely writing prose and delude himself by calling it poetry.

The scene of this beautiful play is laid in Benares, and in it the forces of evil and good are matched.

Its ideals

The whole writing is studded with beautiful thoughts, pithy phrases terse and pregnant aphorisms conveying grand philosophical and psychological truths, love maxims and religious ideas. Properly studied and understood in its bearing, the play is bound to advance the cause of social reform and service, a great many times more than vapid platform speeches or inane homilies. The author has cast round womanhood a halo and sacredness, which had been lost to it for centuries, and which were only being retrieved with the introduction of education on Western lines. She is not intended to be a party to a physical union. He considers her capable of exerting higher influences. There can be a प्रेम or स्नेहलभ (a love union), an आत्मलभ (a union of souls) between a man and a woman; he even goes a step further and presents a picture of a pair of Platonic lovers, who may marry and still lead a celibate's, ब्रह्मचारी's i.e. single, life.

The main plot consists of the fate of the heroine and hero,

And plot

Jaya and Jayant: the subsidiary plots are those which concern the fate of the King and Queen of Giridesh, of the King and Queen of Benares, of the dissolute priest of Benares and his victims. The subsidiary plots, however, at some stage or other take up Jaya within their toils. Jaya is the daughter of the King and Queen of Giridesh, Jayant is the orphan son of their deceased minister and known by his adventurous and brave deeds. Brought up together from childhood, they naturally want to marry each other. But social custom prevented a Kshatriya Princess marrying outside her own fold, and the Queen too did not fall in with the inclinations of the pair, so their wishes as well as those of the King,

(who saw no harm in their union), were overruled, and the hand of Jaya offered to the King of Benares. This King, on his way to Giridesh, had formed an intimacy originating in sin, with the daughter of the Brahmin priest of Benares, a follower of the ways of the Shakta or Vama Margis, whose creed is enjoyment of wine and women. When this King came from Benares, he found the Princess unwilling to be married to him. Jaya, thinking that her presence in Giridesh would mean an enforced union, secretly fled away from her home, and Jayant was suspected of having encouraged her in doing so. The King of Benares being thus baulked of his desire, vowed vengeance on the King of Giridesh, and announced that unless he got Jaya back in a month, he would deprive her father of the throne of Giridesh and further see her a lifelong spinster rather than allow her to bestow her hand on any one else. Jaya could not be found in a month. The King of Benares proved true to his word, and the King and Queen of Giridesh, deprived of their Kingdom, retired to Benares, the refuge of all such distressed people. Jayant wandered in Jaya's search all over India for a long time, but without finding her. He, too, therefore, retired to Benares and founded Harikunj, an Ashram (a Home) there for persons like himself. Jaya, in her wanderings, had to pass through many vicissitudes, all of them severe strains on her chastity. In a secluded spot in the jungle she saw the Shakta sensualists celebrating their orgies, under the leadership of a Yogi from her own country, while her own maid-servant was the head priestess. The priest committed an indecent assault on Jaya, but before he could succeed some stray Shikari of the forest, who too had his eyes on her, pierced his heart with an arrow and he died. Then she met with the fate of Damayanti, whom too her Shikari saviour wished to marry. He took her to his home where she found another woman, a prisoner like herself. She was Tejba,

the sister of the dissolute head priest of Benares, with whose daughter as said above, the local King had become intimate. Both Tejba and Jaya conspired to do away with the hunter, and Jaya ultimately wounded him with an arrow and both left the place as nuns after blessing him for whatever good he had done them. In this state they wandered over to the banks of the holy Ganges, where there was a religious fair being held on Vaishakh Sud third. The Temple on the river bank was a temple of sin where the old priest presided. Jaya and Tejba did not know it, and when after bathing in the sacred waters they entered the Temple with the priest (a counterpart of the Russian Priest Rasputin), he tried to violate Jaya's chastity. She broke away and jumped over the dome of the Temple into the river, and Tejba, whom too the bestial priest, not knowing that she was his sister, wanted to assault, took him by the hair of his head and dragged outside. It was then that he recognised her and repented. Tejba exhorted him to consider all women his sisters.¹ It was at this moment that the King of Benares came with the daughter of the priest (whom he had married by this time, behind his back) for a bath and then a voice told him that his daughter had been spirited away by the King. This news surprised him considerably and he feelingly addressed the King, saying, "O thou the heir of Ravan, O Brahma Rakshas, forget not that every woman is the darling and affectionate daughter of some father. If thou desirest the light of righteousness for thy daughter, foul not the daughter jewel of any one else." Jaya, who had fallen into the Ganges was rescued by some of the disciples of Jayant and brought into his Ashram, where efforts were made in the private chamber of Jayant to revive her. He being overwhelmed at the unexpected

1. दृष्टिमान्नी सर्व सुदरीओने ज्हेन प्रमाणेन ओ पापगुरु

opportunity, went into his private room full of varying emotions, and the picture drawn by the writer of the conflict in his mind between the lower and higher emotions of man in the presence of a beautiful woman is sublime. He fights his lower nature and succeeds. To Cupid, he says "Begone, Begone Thou Cupid this is the cave of Yogis," Jaya on becoming conscious, recognised him and then they put the supreme question to themselves "Would it be marriage or duty, Lust or Love? The world or service?"¹ The reply given by Jaya is Soul marriage (आत्मलगा), 'Talk not of the body. Thou hast not touched my body till to-day, wouldst thou now pollute it?' Jayant fell in with the plan which was that he should carry on his work in the Harkunj as a celibate and she should open a Math or Home for her sisters on the opposite bank of the river and both should teach the men and women of the world the dignity and sublimity of social service. Even the gods in heaven were so pleased at this solution that not only did they send down their Apsaras to bless this union but they actually assisted at the opening of Jaya's Home. The epilogue is worthy of this lofty conception and the scene in which Jaya and Jayant united in soul divided in body, sail away on a full moon night on the bosom of the Ganges in two different boats so that their bodies may not touch is so dazzling that it leaves the reader speechless and awed in the presence of a concourse of elements, natural and supernatural till now never witnessed by him. The other characters the King and Queen of Girdesh, the King of Benares the priest the maid-servant, all live long and are granted forgiveness by Jaya and Jayant.

1. त्या के धर्म ? काम के स्नेह ? समाज क सेवा ?

It will have been noticed that the ideal of Nanalal is not the continence of Hanuman, the ideal Hindu Strong Man, or of Bhishma, the ideal Warrior, both of them lifelong celibates, but one where although fettered by marriage, in spite of the union of man with woman, because of that state of duality merged into unity, it is possible to triumph over the weaknesses of this world, life-long (physical) abstinence in spite of soul-union. This is how it can be shortly put. Jayant propounds it, like this.¹ "Jaya, Single-handed? No. No one has succeeded. No one will succeed. It is the pair of Purush (Man) and Prakriti (Woman) that brings into being new worlds." The pair is,

Soul marriage no doubt united by marriage, but it is a soul marriage, not a body marriage. This soul marriage is merely the result of love, it does not originate in lust—a desire for the lower form of enjoyment, for physical union.²

As expected, there has been a large amount of criticism from all quarters aimed at this novel ideal, Ideal criticised paradoxical in its terminology, soul marriage minus body marriage-marriage, but not a marriage, union, still not a union. Critics have not found it possible to accept

१ एकले हाथे ? नहिज जया !
कोई नित्यं नथी, कोई जितसे नाहि.
पुरुष ने प्रकृतिनी बेलझोज
नष ब्रह्मांड सरजे छे.

२ प्रेम त्यां न होय कामवासना;
प्रेममौ नथी देहनी वांछना:

Where there is love, there is no lustful desire. Love does not yearn for the body;

a state of marriage, where love predominates but where union would contaminate, nor are they prepared to accept that body unions are entered into solely for physical gratification and cannot rise higher. One of them¹ has shown that the playwright himself has found it difficult to avoid the ordinary conception of marriage and has, unwittingly perhaps been betrayed into giving it a place, as high as his theory of soul marriage,² though he starts with the idea that marriage in the ordinary sense is a sin. He puts it negatively, 'Sin is not love' (पाप ते प्रेम नहीं), meaning that the connection of body with body even though based on wedded love, is sinful.

The hero and heroine, though they pass through ordinary human experiences, still seem to be the demigods of ether, or of some atmosphere which ordinary mortals do not breathe. The expressions put into their mouths, the sentiments expressed by them,

¹ Mr. Narsinhrao B Divatia in his extensive but incomplete review of this play in the pages of the Vasant for Samvat years 1971 and 1972, calls Nanalal's ideal of observing lifelong continence, in spite of union, a psychological illusion, somewhat resembling the optical illusion of parallel railway tracks which appear from a distance to have joined each other.

2 “ विलास अनिष्ट नहीं,
विलासनी लृप्णा अनिष्ट છે
વિલાસ ભાષના સયમ નિપ્રદ
તે સસારીઓના પ્રજ્ઞાચર્યન.”

Enjoyment is not undesirable,
The yearning after enjoyment is so ;
Proper control of the desire for enjoyment,
Is the continence પ્રજ્ઞાચર્ય of the ordinary mortal.

are more above the head of the ordinary human being ; they float in the air, are difficult to catch hold of. ¹

¹ For instance, Jaya's reply to Jayant's demand for union,

આશા ને કામ અનન્ત છે,
કાલ ગગાને કોઈ કાંઠડે,
કોઈક જીતુમાં સ્વીકારીશ, કુમાર,
* * *
હજી આધે છે એ પ્રમાત;
* * *
જીતીને આવજે એ (i.e., દિલમાંના દૈત્યો),
આપીશ તું ઇચ્છે છે તે.
નથી આજે એ અમૃતનો અવસર.

Jayant's demand, pairing Purush and Prakriti is also *of a piece with it :—

મૈયાએ મ્હને પવિત્રતા પાડે,
એ પવિત્રતા પથરાવીશ પૃથ્વીમા.
સ્થામે તીરે છે જયન્તની રામવાહી,
આ તીરે માહશે જયા સીતાવાહી;
ત્પ્હાં છે વીર રસનાં મહાકાવ્ય,
અહિં જન્મશે શૃંગારના કાવ્ય શયમાર.
* * *

પ્રમુની આશા છે સુન્દરી સંઘને કે
જગત જન્માવતું ને ધવરાવતું,
આ મઠમાં કામધેનુઓ ઉછેરીશ,
એ કામધેનુઓ નરલોકને ધવરાવશે,
ને માનવીના દેવ ઉછેરશે.
અવનીને અમૃત મેઘથી સીંચશે
ને અમરો ઉતરશે વાહીએ વાહીએ.

Notwithstanding the mincemeat made of several of its ideals and ideas by critics and reviewers this play remains one of the very best of the seventy or eighty plays that are found in Gujarati. His earlier play, *Indu Kumar*, which is incomplete, is overshadowed in popularity by *Jaya* and *Jayant*.

A social custom of even more material importance contributes the plot of another remarkable play *Rajno Parvat* Rao Bahadur Ramanbhai's *राइनो पर्वत* (1914) is founded on an old folklore tale, where the son of a murdered king of Gujarat for years lived in concealment from the murderer and usurper for several years as a gardener, near the capital and with the assistance of his mother, whose maternal instinct would not rest till she had regained the throne for her son got back the Gadi of his ancestors. The means to win it back invented by his mother were not quite straight. It was given out that the aged usurper, who had married a young wife, was desirous of getting back his youth, and the doctor recommended entire seclusion in a cell for six months to render the remedy effectual. Rejuvenation therefore required disappearance for six months, at the end of which the king was expected to come out and take back the reins of government in his hand. Jalaka Rai's mother, was to play the Doctor, as a reward for the cure, the king had promised a fourth share of his kingdom to her son. Raj, while watching the garden at night for prowling animals, by mistake shot him under the impression that he was a thief. Jalaka and Sitaling a confidential follower of the king thereupon quietly buried the dead body and gave out next day that the king had retired for his cure. Their object was to palm off

Raj as the rejuvenated king after six months any difference in the persons of the two being attributed to the improvement due to the cure. It was put to Raj that this imposture was necessary in the interests of Gujarat otherwise, the king having died heirless, there would be chaos and anarchy. The excuse did not quite reconcile the high souled and straightforward prince to the situation, but he consented to do so to please his mother. However when the time came for his investiture, he honourably acknowledged what had happened to the old king, and announced his retirement for a fortnight to give time to his subjects to decide as to whether they would like him to take his place. He similarly revealed himself to the young queen Lilavati, who was momentarily expecting her rejuvenated husband to join her. The news gave her a great shock and she fainted. In the meanwhile, Jalaka, who was ignorant of her son having made a clean breast of the whole thing to her came to see Lilavati, and Lilavati cursed her as the author of her misfortunes. In his retirement for a fortnight, Raj had an adventure in the shape of rescuing princess Vinavati from being drowned in the river while sailing in a pleasure boat without knowing who she was. Thus Vinavati had been shut up in a guarded palace and cut off from all intercourse with the outside world, the reason being that her father the dead king, did not want her to be told by any one that she had become a widow, when a mere child, and thus to suffer the hardships of a life, inevitable in the case of a Hindu widow. It was given out to the world that she was dead. Vinavati and Raj fell in love with each other, and the latter formed the courageous resolution of marrying her, though he knew that this unpopular and unusual step would jeopardise his prospects to the throne.

However ultimately all sensible people, including Lalavati, approved of the step, and the innocent princess was made happy, and Rai was elected to the kingship.

The assertion of the eternal truth that straightforwardness and honesty are the only right guides
 Its object in a man's conduct, is the object with which the play is written. Side by side with it, through the mouths of women like Savitri and Kamala, the liberty of women is pleaded and the principle vindicated by the union of Vinavati with Rai. Vinavati was a child widow, who hardly knew when she was married vicariously to the sword of the bridegroom, according to Rajput custom, what or who her husband was. The marriage was one in mere name. But such has been the rigor of Hindu social customs that such an innocent child is condemned to the lifelong miseries of widowhood. It is for the uprooting of this nefarious custom that social reformers have been working for the last fifty years. The author has shown the unreasonableness and absurdity of it vividly by the instance of Vinavati, and his robust belief in the correctness of his opinion cannot but communicate itself to his readers.

The play all along is cast on the lines of sobriety. It does not quiver or sparkle even where the Rao Bahadur has betrayed himself into humour (and he could not help it, as he is constitutionally a humourist), it is quiet and unobtrusive. Although a poet of no mean order, he has not resorted to any flights of imagination in his description of Nature or expression of emotion and sentiment, but confined them to a simplicity, admir-

able because skilful The truths are inculcated as simply as possible because truth requires no embellishment.¹

The two characters that stand out in bold relief in the picture of this play are Rai and his mother Jalaka, or to call them by their proper names, Rai and Jalaka one the anti thesis of the other Prince Jagadipadev and Queen, or rather Dowager Queen Amritadevi No amount of temptation, nor the prospect of getting a throne, nor the dictates of a fond and loving mother make him swerve from the right path, be it his election to the kingship or the renunciation of Vinavati's love Similarly Jalaka, though a woman, is as resourceful as a diplomat, no untoward circumstances, no miscarriage of her arrangements upset her She is ready always with new plans and devices, and still when the end comes, the woman asserts herself and she expires admitting that it never pays to follow the crooked path, even though one be prepared to take the consequences. Kalyâna Kâma and Savitri the minister and his wife, Durgesh and Kamala (types of connubial bliss), who owed their union to the former

- ¹ (a) एक असत्यभी जन्मे असत्यो बहु जूनवा,
रोपे असत्य जे तेने पडे ए झुठ बेटवा. p 38

From one untruth many other untruths are born he who sows untruths has to suffer the consequences of a forest of untruths

- (b) जगत् आखा तणु राज्य चलावे प्रभु सत्यभी p 38

God reigns over the whole world through Truth

- (c) વિરોધી સત્યનો એવો પ્રેમ વિશ્વે અશક્ય છે

જ્યા સત્ય ત્યાજ છે પ્રેમ, જ્યા પ્રેમ ત્યાજ સત્ય છે. p 38.

It is impossible to conceive of a Love in this world which is opposed to Truth. Where there is Truth there is Love and where there is Love there only is Truth.

two, are minor characters, but the men embody in themselves the traits of faithfulness and loyalty to their master, while the women show liberal mindedness and exaltedness in their ideas of social service. The change wrought in Lalavati by the change in circumstances due to the king's death is marvellous, but all the same such as one usually finds in high-souled Indian women. It is both real and pathetic

Jaya and Raj no Parvat compared	Raj no Parvat and Jaya and Jayant both were published in 1914, the year of the Great War. To put it briefly, while the one was sober and rode on quiet waters, the other was electrifying, riding on a stormy and tempestuous sea.
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The dramatic literature peculiar to the Parsi community also follows the same lines as those of their Hindu brethren. The earliest attempts were confined to writing plays on subjects connected with their ancient history and historical tradition: Bejan and Manuji, Jal and Rudabeh, Prince Siavaksh, Jahanbaksh, Gulrukhsar, Jamshed and Zohak, were all founded on incidents in the history of Persia as narrated by Firdausi or other Iranian writers. The style and language were also peculiar to the earlier state of the education of the community. The verses were modelled on Persian poetry and prosody, while the prose partook of all the characteristics of the highly artificial prose met with in that language, where whole sentences consist of blocks of rhyming phrases. The imitation was not always successful, and as the limited capacity of Gujarati vocabulary was always being strained, being unable to furnish appropriate words to make up the pairs of the rhyming or jingling phrases, required to give the style a flavour of sound Persian prose, resort had to be had to Persian

itself, and it is due to this reason that all these early attempts are top heavy with an unusual admixture of Persian words ¹ The fascination of this style did not leave them even when they were engaged in making translations or adaptations from English ² The atmosphere surrounding their characters remained Persian.

With the progress of English education, however a change came over the spirit of their works They engaged themselves almost exclusively on social topics, and whether in translations or original, they wrote mostly for the stage Demand for a large amount of money before a Parsi youth would consent to marry a Parsi girl, the extravagant tastes of the latter, in imitation of European fashions, irrespective of her parents' pecuniary ability, and consequent immorality and many cognate subjects have furnished the leaven which has leavened a large mass of their dramatic literature. In exposing their social evils their innate humour has always come to their help, and whether the plays have been read or witnessed on the stage, they have been received with roars of laughter. The late Kalkhusru Navroji Kabraji attained distinction in this branch of writing, he was an expert adapter both of English novels and dramas to Parsi life, and his adaptations of some of Mrs. Herry Wood's novels especially "East Lynne" and "Mrs Halliburton's Troubles," ³ have been considered master pieces by his special circle of Parsi readers and by many Hindus

¹ The style to a very great extent resembles what Mansukhram S. Tripathi would have brought about in Gujarati through the overloading of it with pure Sanskrit words.

² See for instance, कसरेबजना कारस्तान an adaptation of Othello

³ गुली गरीब ; दु खीआरी बचुना दुखना पहाड.

too, whose inclinations lay towards light but sound and healthy reading. These adapted novels were dramatised and drew large audiences. The community is known for its fondness for good cheer, but still this wholesale imitation of Western fashions of eating, dressing and living in the towns began to alarm some sober people, and they thought the remedy lay in harking back to the simple, innocent and unadulterated life of the village, so that the plays which began to be written—and written in large numbers—later, were all meant to check this vein of indiscriminating and wholesale imitation by pouring ridicule on it, and by vividly contrasting with it the straightforward and honest and also moral lives of the Parsi village youth and men, unsoiled by the sordid influence of a town life¹. Drink, gambling, fast life, club life are some of the evils tackled by them. Kaikhusru's brother, Bomanji Navroji Kabraji, a prolific writer of plays, traversed a very large part of the social region referred to above and as his plays and farces were meant exclusively for acting, and as they proved successful on the stage, in spite of their being devoid of any commendable literary merits, they brought him a pretty large income.²

Kabraji
brothers

The names of his plays are familiar to all theatre-goers, both Parsi and non-Parsi. Social purity was the object he always kept in

¹ (1) મોલીજાન, (2) વિનાશ કાલે વિપરીત વૃથો, (3) અસલાજી, (4) તક્તીરની સાક્ષી, (5) નવગી મીલિંગ (6) જોડ્યા માગના જૂદા કેજ; Kaikhusru Navroji Kabraji wrote (1) and (2), Ardeshir Bomanji Patel a revered figure in Parsi literature wrote (3) and (4) while a voluminous writer, now no more Kharshedji B Framroze wrote (5) and (6)

² The farces are અધારી રાત્રે મગ કાઢ્યા પ્હેરા ન્હેલ કાસા મગો પટેલો મિતમાઈ સુપ્તલાજીના સવટો ગુજારી ગામરેની મોરી મોલી નુત કચ્છુ, દોરગી દુન્યા ગામે વેદેસ્ત માપના સાપ

view, and the beauty of plays written by him is that they can be read by and acted in the presence of audiences consisting of both sexes without any objection whatever. He has studiously avoided all reference to or suggestions of improper conduct, and thus removed many of the objectionable features which pervert the taste of the present-day theatre-goers

Somewhat resembling the Kabraji brothers in their writing for the theatre, but differing in the fact that
 Some Hindu writers both owned theatrical troupes and staged plays on their own account, Dayabhai Dholshaji (died 1906) of Ahmedabad and Vaghji Asharam Oza (1850-1897) of Morvi in Kathiawad have served to swell the number of actable plays. They have been written by them mostly on historical subjects, mixed with mythology and they tried to resuscitate the interest of the Gujarati public in mythology. Minor writers like Gopalji Kallhanji Delvadakar, Raj Kavi Nathuram and Vishwanath of the Kathiawadi Natak Mandli have fed the stream. In many of them we see occasional flashes of literary merit

To conclude, dramatic literature in Gujarati, both in its quantity and quality, is negligible. In number
 Dramatic literature poor, on the whole the plays cannot go beyond one hundred, out of which those which count for anything are not more than can be counted on one's fingers.

At all times it is difficult to produce a good play, it is more difficult to keep up a continuity of level, like Ben Jonson or Shakespeare or even Bernard Shaw. Ranchhodbhai set the ball in motion but beyond intermittent attempts, its onward progress

has not been perceptible. Plays written for the theatre are written for the pit and lack poetry; plays written otherwise lack unity of purpose and suffer from a starvation of original thought and action. The state of this literature is pitiable. It wants a shaking up.

CHAPTER V

FICTION

It is proposed to treat under this heading of Novels Stories and Works of wit and humour

Story writing in old Gujarati followed story-telling Story writing comprised presentment of mythological subjects, like the poems of Premanand and wordly subjects like the poems of Samal, but so far as prose writing was concerned there was hardly a single work, excepting some short stories, written in old Gujarati which are now being found out from old Jain Bhandars or other inaccessible sources, and from which extracts are now and then being published to show what sort of prose was being written in those early days ¹ But the idea then prevalent was that stories could be narrated in verse only. That prose could be utilised for this purpose dawned on us only when education began to be imparted on the Western system, and it may safely be taken that the art of story telling whether in the shape of a short story or a long story, a novel or a humorous skit, came into being after education on new lines had taken some root and people had become acquainted with English works of fiction Thus it will be seen that all writers of fiction, whether Hindu or not, were the product of English education

¹ E.g., see the story beginning with the passage पादलीपुत्र नामे नगरं कुतः etc given in the Introduction to the Narma Kosha (1873) But even these were translations of Sanskrit works like the Panch Tantra and the Hitopadesha

Mahipatram and Nandshankar, Kankhuru Kabraji and his brother Bomanji had studied English, and it was their desire to make their less educated brethren acquainted with that attractive phase of English literature that made them turn either to translation and adaptation of works in English or to writing first hand on those lines

Novel writing
due to English
education

Novels naturally made a greater impression on them than romances, but the line of cleavage between the two is not at all sharply kept up in Gujarati. Whether the story is a romance or a novel, it is commonly known in Gujarati as a નવલકથા which is a literal translation of the latter word, a new story, નવલ meaning new or novel.

Novels more
impressive than
romance

Rao Bahadur Nandshankar Tuljashankar is commonly considered to be the father of the Gujarati novel, though earlier efforts in the direction than his Karan Ghelo (1868) had already secured some measure of popularity. Chronologically સાસુ વહની ભડાઈ (Quarrel between a mother in law and her daughter in law) would take the first place. It is purely a social story depicting in humorous language the normal domestic life of a Gujarati family of the middle class, emphasising the inborn proclivity of the mother in law to make the life of her daughter in law as full of worry and comfortless as possible, in the exercise of her arbitrary authority as the head of the house, by means of taunts forced over-work and deprivation of all opportunities of seeing her husband, talking to him during the course of the day and till late at night forgetful of the fact that at one stage of her life, she too was a daughter-in law and did not quite fall in love with the treatment she received then

Nandshankar,
pioneer in
novel writing

from her own mother-in law The first edition is out of print ; only a revised edition can now be had The language is simple and the subject being a familiar one, there was no difficulty for it in finding its proper place Mahapatram's whole life was actuated by his desire to bring about a reform in the social customs of Gujarati Hindus and he bent his efforts in that direction from the earliest times This story was one of the first manifestations of that desire

Looking to the state of education and literature when Karan Ghelo was published (1868) a critic whose standard is such as can not be easily satisfied, compares it to the high hill-fort of Pavagadh, lonely and stately, overlooking the extensive flat plains of the Panch Mahals ¹ Nardshankar has written no other book besides it and has rested ever after on the laurels he won by it Mr Russel an Educational Inspector at the time, had expressed a desire to him that he would like to see indigenous literature in fiction in Gujarati resembling English novels, and it was to carry out that suggestion that this novel was written It is one of the first of historical novels, and portrays the chequered career and tragic end of the last of the Hindu Kings of Gujarat, Karan of the Vaghela dynasty, whom Ala ud-din Khilji attacked and defeated at the end of the thirteenth century A.D The story itself is simple. Karan became enamoured of the beautiful wife of Madhav, his minister, when he saw her worshipping at a temple and wished to possess her During Madhav's absence he had her brought forcibly to his palace and on coming to know of it, Madhav travelled over to Delhi and by way of

¹ Narsinhrao Divatia's address as President of the Fifth Gujarati Sahitya Parishad at Surat. (1915)

revenge, persuaded the Sultar to invade Gujarat, undertaking to supply all the necessary "intelligence." The expedition proved successful and Karan who fought with all the traditional courage of a Rajput had ultimately to flee for life to save his daughter Deval Devi, whose mother was taken a prisoner and sent to the Royal harem. Karan took refuge in the jungles of the Deccan with the Princess, whose hand he had to bestow on the scion of an inferior house, the Prince of Devagiri much against his will to save her from the clutches of the Muhomedans who had been sent out from Delhi to find her out in compliance with the desire of her mother, who had become a favourite of the Sultan. While on her way from one Deccan fort to another, she accidentally fell into the hands of one of the search parties and was taken to Delhi. This broke Karan's heart and he died a victim to poetic justice. A King, who instead of protecting the sanctity of his subject's home violated it met a just retribution in having his own Queen forced to lie on the bed of a Mlechha and his daughter married to a Mlechha's son.

In this bare outline many of the incidents, where the novelist's pen has served him best have been omitted. They are intended to give a picture of some of the social customs and domestic usages of the time and the word pictures are vivid. The magnificent description of the way in which the Dasera holiday was observed in the capital of a Hindu Raja, the description of Madhav's palatial house, his younger brother Keshav's brave defence of Madhav's wife, Rupa Sundari, against the soldiers of the King who had been sent to carry her away, his death and the consequent immolation (Sati) of his wife, Guna Sundari with his dead body on the funeral pyre.

towards the commencement of the novel, the graphic description of Nature in the Araval Hills the way in which pilgrim parties composed of old and young travel and the risks of old and unprotected women the way in which Mahomedan Judges (Kazis) performed their duties, and the hardships of the Hindus the description of the Ellora Caves, are superb. It is **not** intended to say that they are perfect some of them do offend against some canon or other of the critic, but their general effect is so pleasing and the interest created so unflagging, that they have deservedly given a popularity to the book which has not yet waned. It is still passing through its many editions and Government and the Bombay University have given unsolicited the imprimatur of their approval to it by recognising it as a text book in Educational institutions. On its historical side it is a mixture of romance and novel and distinct traces of Sir Walter Scott's historical novels are found in it. Its delineation of human passions has been pronounced to be weak, continuity of interest has been found to be broken in some places and several other technical faults have been found in it but, notwithstanding such faults, on account of its admirably simple language which adapts itself with a due sense of appropriateness to the incidents described or sentiments expressed dignified, grave or light as the occasion requires people have chosen to ignore its shortcomings and have unanimously accorded it a place from which it has till now not been dislodged.

Kathuawad and old Gujarat have been the home of romance and chivalrous actions romance and chivalry of the kind immortalised in the pages of Tod's Rajasthan and Forbes' Raj-
 Stories of chivalrous deeds
 Mala It has also been the home of intrigue—political,

court, and love Floating literature, commemorating love intrigues, political rivalries, court jealousies and throwing many side lights on the life lived in remote times by the high and the low was found existing in the families of the bards, royal priests (Raj Gor) or court poets. Stories were either communicated from sire to son or even recited extempore With the changing of times, and spread of education and consequent lessening of encouragement to such story reciters there was a great danger of the literature being lost to the province A Parsi gentleman therefore took it upon himself to collect it from such bardic reciters and preserve it in the form of a book Framji Bomanji shirked neither trouble nor expense in accomplishing this valuable work and Gujarati literature cannot be sufficiently grateful to him for having given it a collection called *ગુજરાત અને કાઠીઆવાડ દેશની યાત્રીઓ* (1875) Tales of

Gujarat and Kathiawad which rejoiced generation after generation of Gujaratis The style and language in which the stories are put are very simple, and so very like the language

Tales of
Gujarat and
Kathiawad

written by a Hindu Gujarati that reader after reader admired the ability of a Parsi writer who could, then, write Gujarati wholly indistinguishable from that written by a Hindu In fact, Navalram remarked that he had till then never seen such pure (*શુદ્ધ*) Gujarati written by a Parsi The preface was written in an equally faultless style It is now alleged however, that Framji was responsible only for making short notes like this,—“A King—Two Queens—One favourite another not—no Prince born—Unhappy—Prince born—King ignorant—Prince going Shikar—Unexpected meeting’ on hearing the stories from their reciters These short notes were then amplified and elaborated by several Hindu clerks and assistants,

and hence the Hindu Gujarati language. The compiler of the *સાદીનુ સાહિત્ય* vouches for the truth of this statement¹. Looking, however to the preface and another Gujarati book called the *કુમાર દર્પણ* written by him it is hard to conceive why one who could write such fine Gujarati should resort to the subterfuge referred to above. Whatever the truth may be, it does not affect the merits of the book nor its value to literature. A similar book, *ગુજરાતની જૂની વાર્તાઓ*—Old tales of

Gujarat—by Manilal Chhabaram Bhat—is an

Old tales of interesting collection of these stories, which Gujarat although full of anachronisms are widely read, e.g., compare the facts in the story of Raj Yogi with the true state of Gujarat during the rule of the Valabhis.² Manilal's taste seems to lie this way because he has contributed two more historical stories, "Prithuraj Chohan"³ and "Chand Bardayi" (1898), and the "Queen of Jhansi" both originally conceived and written by him. The striking military deeds of Prithiraj—the most popular hero of Northern India to this day whose exploits are the subject of bards

1 See p 175. He says he himself supplied one such story and his friend Keshavalal Parikh several others.

2 The late Ichharam Suryaram Desai Editor of the Gujarati made full use of his opportunities as a journalist and whenever he came in contact with any bard or individual likely to be a repository of such stories he took them down. He published his collection as *ભાત્તવારણની વર્તો*.

3 The highly chivalrous and romantic career of Prithiraj Chohan who fought against Mahomed Ghori has attracted many writers in more than one vernacular in India. In Gujarat itself besides this novel of Manilal, another work called 'Pruthuraj' based on Bakhbars and historical materials was published in 1893 by Atmaram Dvivedi. Bhunrao's poem, Prithiraj Raso has already been referred to.

songs and vernacular epics'¹—are very stirringly told. Lakshmi Bai, the Queen of Jhansi, of Mutiny fame, 'the best and bravest' of the rebel leaders in the words of Sir Hugh Rose, and who was possessed of courage far superior to her co-operators like Tantia Topi,² is the heroine of his second novel.

Rao Sahib Mahapatram was an indefatigable worker in many directions and early in the eighties, he wrote two historical novels, *Vanaraj Chavdo* (1881) and *Siddharaj Jayasinh*. Prince Vanaraj after undergoing many vicissitudes ultimately became the king of Gujarat. Many incidents in the life of this king who was brought up in seclusion in a forest (જંગલ) on account of the enemies (foreigners from the South) of his father Jayashekhara ruling in Gujarat after defeating and killing him and the help rendered to the young prince and his widowed mother by a Jain Sadhu, are known to every school going child in Gujarat. They are sufficiently romantic to found a novel upon and Mahapatram naturally seized them as an appropriate background for his work. The novel, however, wherever it touches the historical portion of the subject matter reads more like a life of the King. The remaining portion is a projection of the author's views on social reform, abolition of unreasonable social customs, child marriages and other allied evils. This has detracted from its value. The language is also not of a high order because it seems to have been intended largely for children and keeps to the level of their understanding. Vulgar and improper expressions also detract from its value. Lullabies and wedding songs are out of place in a novel.

1 The Oxford History of India (1911) by Vincent A. Smith p. 195

2 Ibid p. 721

In Siddharaj Jayasinh, the author selected another suitable background for a historical novel. Siddharaj's reign formed one of the most brilliant annals of Hindu rule in Gujarat, his encouragement of literature, patronage of Brahmins whose influence had receded before that of the Jains, his love of architecture, and his conquest of neighbouring provinces, leave an impression of greatness in the mind of the Gujarati child first learning his or her historical lesson in school, which in later life is never wiped out. The brightness, however, is dimmed by such incidents as his attempt to violate the chastity of brave Ranak Devi, the wife of Ra Khengar, the Ruler of Junagadh whom he vanquished by foul means, his improper advances to Jasma, a beautiful woman belonging to the labouring class, who in spite of her low station in society was as pure and chaste as Sita. The materials were therefore quite those fit for the setting of a historical novel; but here too the good work has been marred by those very defects which predominate in the companion work on Vanaraj. To him, however belongs the credit of a pioneer, who when once the source had been tapped by Nandshankar and the tiny stream made to flow, continued it by feeding it with readable historical novels, albeit tinged with sound social advice.

Closely connected with the last novel of Mahipatram, in fact, the subject matter being one of the main but discreditable events in the life of Siddharaj Jayasinh, is the novel of Ranak Devi (1884) by Anantprasad Trikamlal Vaishnav. Himself a native of Kathiawad, he was eminently in a position to appreciate the heroic conduct and tragic end of Rani Ranak Devi, who rather than yield to the advances of her husband's conqueror to save the life of herself and her sons, saw them killed before her eyes.

and with a terrible curse¹ on her lips for the destroyer of her home and happiness immolated herself on a funeral pyre near Wadhwan and thus preserved her chastity. The incidents lend themselves to admirable elaboration and manipulation in the hands of a skilful artist, and of the two or three novels which were written to carry on the vogue of *Karan Ghelo* this one has proved the best. The author confesses that it was the popularity of *Karan Ghelo* that made him write this novel.

Rao Bahadur Hargovandas Dwarkadas Kantawala's
 અધેરી નગરીનો ગર્ધવસેન એક ઇતિહાસ વાર્તા (1881) can only by
 Kantawala's courtesy be called a novel and by still greater
 Gardhavasen courtesy a historical novel. His object was
 to expose the gross maladministration of
 Native states and the iniquities rampant among the courtiers
 of such states. He could have done so very well by putting
 down the different incidents narrated in it by dividing them into
 separate stories which the book really consists of, instead of
 loosely stringing them on the thread of Gardhavasen's life a
 fact which gives them an air of unreality. In brief the plot is
 that Gardhava—(a donkey)—sen was the spoilt child of his
 father, and consequently when he came to the throne he was
 ignorant of the ways of the world and was surrounded by a
 camarilla of rascally and inept ministers. The name of his
 capital was અધેરી નગરા (a city of darkness and disorder). His
 minister was a Sadhu મંદુરુરી (a lunatic) his Commander in Chief
 દુર્બેટ સિંહ (a weak man) his treasurer સોપાદપંથ (a dullard) his Chief
 Justice અક્ષત્ત બ્રાહ્મણ (an illiterate Brahmin) his customs
 commissioner સુલ્કેશ્વર (the lord of tyranny) his revenue
 minister કપરવશ (a cheat) and his special guard or Aide-de-Camp

¹ For the words of the curse see p. 65 Milestones in Gujarati Literature

अवुध (a fool) This unsavoury company wished to deprive the king of all authority, but they found in his queen समुण सुदरी a wise and prudent lady, an obstacle. She was charged with an attempt to poison him and the king believing the story, made her a prisoner. He then married another woman called कौभाडमति (an intriguer) who, in order to assert herself, made the king a drunkard. Seeing in her an inconvenient rival, the minister introduced a prostitute to the king and through her tried to regain his power. But the result was that the prostitute became all in all, and the new queen and the minister had to join hands in getting rid of her. So she was at once imprisoned and the two regained their power. Their next endeavour was to palm off someone else's son as his own on the king, as the new queen had failed to present him with any. The old queen had a son, the heir apparent, living with the family of his mother's brother, and they tried to have him murdered but failed. All the same, their intrigues continued, and they one day spread the news that the queen was delivered of a boy. It was really a Dhed's child who on dying was substituted by a shepherd's. This however did not satisfy her; she felt the other queen's son still in her way. She therefore once made the king dead drunk, and with the assistance of the minister got him to sign a paper declaring that the old queen's son was not his legitimate son. After this she tried to get rid of him by presenting him with a poisoned cup of wine, but before he could drink it, the unexpected happened. Jayasinh, the son of the old queen, appeared on the scene and snatched away the fatal cup and took the offenders prisoners. He and his uncle had come to know of this intrigue and had started post haste to overthrow it. During the course of these intrigues the king had somehow become reconciled to his old spouse.

A picture
of intrigue in
Native states

Jayasinh then took the reins of administration in his own hands, and let in light where till then darkness had reigned. His method of administration will repay the study of any prince about to mount his Gadi, and this part of the book is about the brightest and best part of it.

On all hands the book is acknowledged to be a failure, the more regrettable, because the author's other works, written about this time, had prepared the public to expect something better from him than an ill-conceived, ill-executed and discursive story like this, an उद्गम वार्ता imaginary tale in his own words. As for its style, he advocated in the preface an extensive use of villager's or country-folk's language and provincialisms. In trying to put this principle into practice, he evolved a style not his usual simple one, but the reverse of it. Provincialisms are good enough for a particular province where they are in common use, but when you expect readers of other provinces also to read your book, they naturally fail to follow them ; e.g., a provincialism current on the borders of Palanpur ¹ would fail to signify anything to an inhabitant of Kathiawad. The canvas again is loaded with pictures of evil only.² Any virtue or good side

¹ E. g., The following mixture of Marwadi and Musalmani, without being explained in ordinary Gujarati would not be understood by any one :

Master—चाकरान ने चाकरान !

क्या कहता है ने नफरान !

Servant—हालीमें धोंगा मस्तान !

Master—हूच रहेतान !

Servant—रहेतान ने फेतान

गरमें कपनी खोर कुले मेदान.

² See En Panchant Navatram's review at pp. 207 et seqq. of Vol. II of नरसिंहायली.

of human nature displayed by the character of सगुण सुदरी the good queen, her son Jayasinh or her brother Kesarisinh, takes such a secondary or subsidiary place on the canvas as to remain almost out of sight. The main defect in the execution is that none of the characters are such as can be found in real flesh and blood. Even Gardhavenen could have been made a little less donkey like and more human than the imbecile nincompoop presented to the reader. As no period is assigned to the incidents the picture is to be taken to apply equally to all times. It is an exaggeratedly dark picture of the chaos and anarchy ruling in Native states, and to those in entire ignorance of the state of affairs there is calculated to give some idea of how the happiness of their subjects is looked after by their rulers.

There are two novels written about this time which arrest our attention because of their being written by a Parsi in pure Gujarati and because of the faithful picture they draw of certain classes of Hindu society from the brush of a Non Hindu. Ratnalakshmi (1881) and Mudra and Kulin (1884) by Jehangir Ardeshir Taleyarkhan had proved so popular when they were first published, that we remember that people eagerly bought or borrowed them (more frequently the latter), and could not rest content till they had finished reading them from cover to cover. Their connection with historical events is rather slight: the latter story, for example, is only remotely connected with the regime of the old Hindu (Wodiyar) Kings of Mysore, the rise of Hyder Ali on the extinction of their rule, the tyrannical careers of father and son (Tipu Sultan), and their ultimate overthrow by the British Power; the hero and heroine (Kulinsinh and Mudra) lived during these times, and that affords the author an excuse for describing them. His descriptions of his characters are powerful and direct, they at once capture the imagina-

tion of the reader. The sufferings undergone by the pair are vividly depicted; the happiness that they secure in the end under the protection of the British rule is a feature in deserved praise of the British Government, which was sought to be prominently brought out. Kulinsinh's personality is full of dignity, and would at any time make one pause and admire it. Mudra is drawn as from life, and the outlines of the picture are full of grace. Human nature has been well studied and drawn by the author and as the language is almost classical and with hardly a tinge of Parsi-ism, both the books form a land-mark for all time in the evolution of fiction in Gujarati literature.

Readers of the stories written by Col. Medows Taylor find in the above two as well as in Ichharam Desai's novels Suryaram's story, Ganga (1889), an imitation of them. Primarily said to be written, like Mahipatram's stories, to impress the reader with the miseries of the social and domestic life of Hindu women, and to impress him also with the notion that reform in that direction and improvement of their lot is an urgent necessity, and knocking heavily at the doors of their conservative sentiments, they fulfil the purpose of a historical novel only in a secondary sense. Ichharam describes the times of Shivaji and the state of Surat under the rule of the Mahomedan Nawabs of the time, the city rolling in opulence with such wealthy families as those of Atmaram Bhukhan and other bankers, whose credit was stated to be so high that their Hundies or Bills of Exchange could be negotiated even in a jungle. The thread connecting the domestic incidents with the historical events of the time is necessarily thin, even invisible, and it appears as if the denouement would not suffer, even if the block containing the historical portion of the novel was lifted out and placed aside.

As a historical novel, Sorathi Somanath, written by Chumal Vardhman Shah, possesses a suggestive and attractive name. The confusion which reigned amongst the Brahmin hierarchy in charge of the temple of Somanath when Mahmood of Ghazni swooped down upon it the cruelty and fanaticism of the foreigner, the complete anarchy, and the utter absence of resourcefulness seen in Bhola Bhumdev, the then King of Gujarat, do credit to the pen of the writer. Beyond a narration of these historical events, which suffers somewhat from exaggeration, there is no alien topic introduced into the novel the writer had no social reform axe to grind.

A great impetus however, was given to the writing of historical novels by the Gujarati Printing Press in Bombay, which under the far-seeing and practical management of Ichharam Suryaram Desai, a genuine lover and encourager of literature, initiated in 1891 the system of giving at the beginning of each year, a novel as a prize to its daily increasing number of subscribers. The system still continues. The novels were not all original, a very large number are translations either from English, Bengali, Marathi or Hindi. As the list itself shows, they travel over a wide field and are not confined to Gujarat. They are all distinguished as a rule by a good style of translation and other qualities which make the works readable. As for the translations, the merits or defects are those of the original writer. The translators have not meddled with them¹.

¹ Those books which have no connexion with historical subjects have been omitted.

1. हिन्दू अने विद्वानिया

2. गंगा गोविन्द सिंह.

Struck, perhaps, with the utility of the idea, two wellknown weeklies of Ahmedabad have followed it; the Praja Bandhu and the Gujarati Punch have been presenting their readers with some good historical novels for about the last ten years. Though

3. ટીપૂ સુલ્તાન.
4. દિલ્લી પર હુલો.
5. અરાઝની સદીનું હિંદુસ્તાન. (1896)
6. ઔરંગઝેબ અને રાજપૂતો. (1897)
7. હેસ્ટીંગ્સનો સોદા
8. નાજારાય વલ્લાહ.
9. બેગમ સાહેબ
10. પાળીપતનું યુદ્ધ. (1900)
11. નૂરજહાન.
12. રૂપનગરની રાજકુંવરી.
13. પ્લાસીનું યુદ્ધ. (1901)
14. શિવાજીનો વાઘનરા.
15. દલ્હીયાટનું યુદ્ધ.
16. પેશવાની પડતીનો પ્રસ્તાવ.
17. ઔરંગઝેબનો ઉદય. (1909)
18. પદ્મિની. (1901)
19. ઘણે આમ. (1911)
20. હમ્મીર દૃઢ અથવા રણધોરનો ધેરો. (1914)
21. પાટળની પ્રમુતા.
22. ચાળકય નન્દિની અથવા ચંચ અને સુરેંધી (1917)
23. અનંગમદ્રા અથવા વાઘ્મીપૂરનો નાશ.
24. રૌનક મહેલની રાજસુટપટ.
25. ચક્રવર્તી હમ્મીર અથવા ચંતિલનો પુનરુદ્ધાર : A continuation of (18)

the historical eras are different, the territories and provinces they relate to different also, still they all bear a family likeness in their names and in the narratives themselves. A full list of the books is not given here, but the curious will find it at the end of any of the later novels.

The prolific pens of writers like Chumal Vardhman Shah and Narayan Visanji Thakkur have contributed the greater part of the series issued from Bombay and Ahmedabad. There are others also who have contributed once or twice. Chumal's field of choice is comparatively limited, and he keeps himself more or less in the neighbourhood of historical facts. Not so Narayan Visanji Thakkur. He is more diffuse, and though he too tries to stick to history, he ranges more widely over social and domestic incidents and displays a morbid penchant for vivid descriptions of physical sexual relations, so intense at times that it would be difficult for him to escape the clutches of the law. A close study of Persian and Urdu books has made him lean towards strewing his works with quotations from writings of well known as well as obscure writers in those languages, in and out of place, and first hand knowledge of the life led by the free and easy folk of North India and Sind has made him paint gruesome pictures of social obscenities, some of them resembling those in the late Mr Stead's *Tribute of Modern Babylon*.

Recently a novelist worthy of the first rank among writers of that class suddenly blossomed out. Till he began in A.D. 1911 with some short stories and published them with great hesitation, concealing his own identity under the significant nom-de-plume of Ghanashyam,¹ no one suspected that

1. Synonymous with Kanaiya, his real name

he had latent powers of first class merit as a novelist. Those short stories¹ are full of humour and wit, and in a quiet but telling way expose a great many of our small and great social, or rather domestic, weaknesses. The very natural way in which he handled the frailties and faults of the type of individuals appearing in his stories, had in itself the promise of a greater power of delineation and description of human feeling and character. But not till his historical novel² came out and it came out unostentatiously as a serial in the weekly newspaper, the Gujarati, and then in a book form as the usual yearly present of the paper in 1916 did people realise what a gifted writer Kanaiyalal Maneklal Munshi³ was. One simply

Advent of
Kanaiyalal
Munshi

rubbed one's eyes to make sure whether it was possible in these days for writers to come out full panoplied like Minerva without undergoing any previous apprenticeship in the line. His book was so well received that he thought it no longer necessary to hide his personality under an assumed name and his subsequent novel⁴ which is in effect a continuation of his first, but on a much higher plane, was published in his own name. The increasing calls of his profession left him very little time to devote to novel writing, but his friends would not allow him to rest till he gave them something more, and yet a third⁵ one was written, evidently under great pressure of time and consequently bearing traces of hustling and ab-

1 Published in collected form as મહાર્ કમજી અને વેશી વતી (1917-18).

2 પારણની મહત્તા, The Greatness of Patan.

3 B.A., LL.B. Advocate, High Court, Bombay.

4 ગુજરાતનો રાજા, The Lord of Gujarat (1918-19)

5 પ્રિયવશ્વ, The Beloved of the World (1920-21.)

ruptness The palm, till he appeared on the horizon, was given to the late Govardhanram Tripathi, as the best novel writer in Gujarati and his claims were founded on his *Sarasvatichandra*. But it is more an encyclopaedia of knowledge than a novel, and hence in the opinion of many, Kanaiyalal has by adhering to the correct canons of novel-writing and by his powerful delineation of human character, dislodged his senior¹

The two first novels depict those years in the early history of Gujarat in the tenth and eleventh centuries, when the Rajputs (Solankis) had just recovered breath and driven away the remnants of the Yavana (Mahomedan) force after Mahmood Ghaznavi's sack of Somanath. The foothold they secured, however, was precarious. At this time the followers of Jin Maheshwar (Jains), inspired by their hatred of the Brahmans and supported by their immense wealth,² and actuated by the religious frenzy of the fanatic to see only one their own religion supreme in the land, were trying their best to undermine the influence of the Brahmans. The history of Gujarat about this time is a seething cauldron of internecine intrigues and inter-communal feuds between the Brahmin and the Jain to gain the upper hand at the Court. And this prevailing spirit of the times has been absorbed by Kanaiyalal as naturally as a sponge absorbs water. If Govardhanram has been successful in painting in their natural colours the intrigues in the courts of Native states in the present times, Kanaiyalal has been equally successful in doing so, for those existing in those

1 See Narsinhrao B. Divatia's Introduction to ગુજરાતનો નાથ

2 And no less by their courage those older Jains in spite of their creed of Ahimsa, were brave warriors in the cause of their religion

remote but more stirring times, when the capital of Gujarat was sought to be made much greater, far higher than what it was. The King of Malwa and his capital city, Avanti (Ujjain) were in those days the cynosure of all eyes. That powerful Kingdom was a thorn in the side of Gujarat, and the energies of every one ruling at Patan were bent on subjugating Malwa, the means, fair or foul, did not matter. The two first stories chronicle these events, and they do it so well that we feel as if breathing the atmosphere of those times. The third novel narrates the struggle between the Kings of Malwa and Telungana, the famous Munj of Dharanagar and Tailapa of Telungana in the Ninth Century A.D. The actual period covered by it is that of the captivity of Munj and his being crushed to death under the feet of an elephant by the orders of Tailapa. Sixteen times was Tailapa defeated by Munj and subjected to the humiliation of having to wash the conqueror's feet in order to regain his Kingdom. On the occasion of the seventeenth expedition, however, the fortunes of war changed, and the bravery of one of his vassals brought victory to Tailapa's arms. Munj was taken captive and before being killed was exhibited in the streets of his victor's capital like a caged circus animal.

The chief historical features of all the three works are well known and hence are not set out in detail here. In the first two, the consuming passion of Minal Devi, the Dravida and Jain Queen of Karna Dev and the mother of Jaya Dev, better known as Siddharaj Jaysinh, to get the reins of government into her own hands, and in the third, the same passion consuming Mrinal Devi, the sister of Tailapa who was the ruling force behind the throne, form the groundwork. In fact, in running after this keen

desire for power, both Royal ladies forgot their sex limitations. Queen Minal and her minister, Munjal, ascetic Mrinal and her bitterest enemy, the sensualist Munj, fight a duel for ascendancy, Minal finds that she is helpless without Munjal, Mrinal past her prime and plain looking, one who has systematically smothered her emotions and passions, ever since she became a widow at sixteen, one who has deliberately dried up the fountains of feeling at their very source and steeled her heart to all the joys and delights of the world, succumbs nevertheless to the artful play of Munj who was by nature and experience an adept in attacking the vulnerable points of a woman's armour. Munj's forte was that he never considered himself beaten in love or war. His nature radiated sunshine wherever he was, enclosed within stone walls or in a cage, sitting on a throne or talking to a woman, handsome or otherwise. The writer's pen is at its best in developing this theme, in describing stage by stage the surrender of the woman to the man. In short, crisp sentences, in telling metaphors, but always knowing when to stop and not piling metaphor on metaphor or simile on simile,¹ he depicts the impetuosity of Munj's passion and haughty Mrinal's being swept off her feet, or the miscalculation of vain Minal Devi, who took no account of her inherent weakness, her helplessness in trying to supplant an astute but faithful servant of the house of Solanki and Munjal's coolness, his uncanny knowledge, like that of another Cardinal Richelieu, of anything and everything that happened in the palace in the town and outside, his foresight, his statesmanship and above all his patriotic fervour, his one aim in life to see Patan become politically the first city in India. Besides those principal pairs of heroes and

1 As is often the case in Tripathi's descriptions

heroes, he has also portrayed subsidiary pairs like Kak Bhatta and Manjari, Rasanidhi (the eminent patron of poets at Ujjain) and Vilasavati. The way in which Kak Bhatta gradually subdues the wayward girl and compels her to marry him and then find in him a storehouse of those qualities which she most admires and hence love him whom she had in the beginning spurned like a dog, with a passionate devotion, the mode in which Rasanidhi awakens the slumbering emotions of a woman's heart in Vilasavati just on the threshold of her youth, which Mrinal Devi her Yogi like and kill-joy mentor had vainly sought to kill, show the author's superb knowledge of human nature. There is an inimitable strength in his portrayal, not only of these characters, but of others who have very little to do with the softer side of human nature. Anandsuri Jati is one of them, Udo Marwadi another, while Kak Bhatta and Munjal Mehta had so far disciplined themselves that they never allowed the calls of love or affection to interfere with their political aims. Even on the most critical occasions, when softer emotions like love or family affection clashed with their sense of duty, they always sacrificed the former. They all pursued their objects with determination and firmness with dauntless courage and an inborn resourcefulness in the face of difficulty and danger. The crooked character of Anandsuri, his fanaticism which struck at nothing provided he could convert the whole Kingdom and Court of Gujarat to Jainism, a task for which he found a ready tool in the weakminded dowager Queen Mrinal Devi, have been so strongly brought into relief, that on the appearance of the book in print, a hue and cry was raised by the Jain community of Gujarat, who charged the author with trying to play off one community (Brahmins) against the other (Jains). They forgot that Munjal Sheth himself who was the rival of

Anandsuri was a Jain. They also forgot that there was tonical testimony for all that was set down in print by author. The storm abated only on the author letting public know that before publishing the book, he had to care to see the proofs passed by a Jain man of letters¹

Kanaiyalal's style is always suited to the occasion. A was a paragon of courage in the face of danger, a Style suited to occasion and a master of sarcasm, and he has drawn with a firm hand. The language put his mouth is never limp. He always speaks straight, and n shirks the issue. So does Munjal, who unlike Munj, is a ma few words taciturn and secretive. But even he, whatever l he says says with an expressiveness and appropriateness display the wealth of the writer's vocabulary. There may in his writings a recklessness in the spelling of words, t might be an unconscious echo of English phrases transl into Gujarati, but on the whole the style is virile, vigor cultured and chaste.

Another novel,² his first creation, which to us seems consciously to have been influenced by Go 'The Taking of Revenge' dhanram's work, presently to be mention and which was Kanaiyalal's first long ne treats of the domestic side of Gujaratis and state intrig. It was contributed also as a serial to the Gujarati. Its h Jagat Kishore, like Sarasvatichandra, is an educated yo and for domestic reasons leaves home, and in the comp of a high-souled Sadhu, "with the learning of a German."

¹ Prof Khushal T Shah B.A. B.Sc.,

² વેતની વસૂલાત The Taking of Revenge (1919). It is translated into English, as a serial in the Calcutta Review (1922) u the title "Vengeance is Mine."

fessor, the administrative ability of an Englishman, the tender heart of a poet, the eye for beauty of a cultured Italian artist, and the Vairagya, the self-less insight and calm of an Indian Rishi,"¹ becomes a Sadhu and is fired with the ambition of "purifying the moral atmosphere of India, stirring up its people to new life, educating them on right lines, and setting before them lofty ideals" The girl of his choice owing to caste restrictions was married to a Bombay "roue," and died after a short and miserable married life, and it was this incident and the incident of the man, under whose roof he and his widowed mother had been given shelter trying to outrage her modesty, and her consequent death, that had in the first place egged him on to take revenge on that man and on those connected with the mercenary marriage of his beloved After a long trial, in which he gets mixed up with certain state intrigues and a detective's adventures, his Guru departs from this world, leaving him at the head of the band of his Sadhus, but with strict injunctions to marry, as in his opinion married life alone could bring about the millennium he wanted for India He marries the daughter of the very man who had attempted to outrage his mother's modesty, and thus takes a revenge, which, had he been left to himself, he would have taken in a more sinister fashion This story, also like the others, is of absorbing interest and in a subsidiary incident adumbrates a future phase of Parsi social life, where Parsi girls sometimes select Hindus for their husbands In this particular case, the love and admiration of the Parsi girl shown for Kishore did not eventuate in marriage, because Kishore would not consent to it, it remained at the stage of "Platonic love"

¹ p. 227 of the novel

Mahomedans, more especially Khojas, who are more allied to Hindus in their modes of life and thought than other Mahomedans, have also contributed their quota to this branch of literature, though not to the same extent as they have done to religious literature, like the Vedanta Karmali Rahim Nanyani is one of them¹ Aladin Shivji Salemahomed has written an original historical novel in which he has tried to depict the state of India twelve thousand years ago²

Govardhanram Tripathi, harnied by calls of a first rate legal practice, produced by dint of sheer perseverance his magnum opus, divided into four volumes, loosely called Sarasvati-chandra, from the name of the hero. He took fourteen years (1887-1901) to complete the work. Like the facets of a gem, it scintillates differently when viewed from different directions. It is a novel, a work on statecraft, on philosophy, political, religious, social and domestic, it is an essay on the present political condition of British India and of the Native states a picture of the relations of the latter with the former, a presentation, and that a first hand one of the intrigues and conspiracies of which these states are the hot beds. Sarasvati-chandra its hero exhibits in his person some of the effects of an Indian youth being educated on Western lines, as his aspirations clash with those of the orthodox and conservative side of the Hindu society. Its heroine Kumud Sundari, an ideal Hindu girl, also educated, presents in her person all that is beautiful

¹ For instance he has written a simple story called दुनिया दर्पण, 'A mirror of the world'

² It is called विभेद (1897). He has translated also a book called 'Secrets of success at the Bar' from English and called it बकीलोकी कतेहरा छुस भेद (1892)

and pure in Indian womanhood. Mated to a dissolute husband, and fated to live under the same roof as Sarasvatichandra, once her ardently loved fiance whom she had been compelled to abandon (because of his mysterious disappearance) in favour of Pramod Dhan, the debauchee, she preserves her purity, her chastity, under the most trying circumstances and ultimately, when owing to the death of the latter, was free to marry again, she cast in her lot with the orthodox ideal, of passing the rest of her life in widowhood. Thus passion for adhering to what was holy and time-worn, and, in addition, for trying to find out some good in such usages, was Govardhanram's fad, according to some, his forte.

The titles of the different volumes epitomise their contents.

The first volume describes the administration of

Its salient features Buddhadhan¹ the father in law of Kumud Sundari, and the Karbhan² at whose house destiny led forlorn Sarasvatichandra to become a guest. The second volume, called the Family maze of Guna Sundari,³ typifies the elements good and bad in the family life of a Hindu house-holder⁴ of the old style, the parts played by the daughters in law and the mothers in law, the respect and reverence shown to the elders of the family, the worship of the family idols in short, even under the fetters of the old style of living, where women are alleged to have no freedom, the beneficent influence that a good, intelligent and virtuous woman like Guna Sundari is able to exert. For those who under

1 बुद्धिधनનો કારભાર. (1887)

2 Minister

3 ગુણસુદરીનું કુટુંબજાલ. (1892)

4 ગૃહસ્થ.

the notion that all old institutions were fit only for condemnation, were discontented with their family life, and consequently were lending themselves wholesale to the imitation of Western customs and usages this volume exhibited an idyllic condition of that very family life when directed by women "born to comfort" like Guna Sundari Govardhanram wanted them to see that everything in our hereditary institutions was not fit for the dungheap. With the adjustment of a detail here and a detail there many germs of happiness lay concealed in them

The third volume was entitled the Political Administration of Ratna Nagari¹ It depicts how and under what conditions the Native states of India gradually came under British control, and after having come into such a state, what policy they should adopt to further their interests, albeit remaining under British suzerainty. Two incidents connected with the publication of this volume, one amusing and the other a sad one, may be noticed here. The sad one was the death, at the early age of thirty two, of one of Govardhanram's sisters, Samarthā Lakshmi, a very gifted lady, one whom the author loved very much, not only for her own sake but as the encourager (मोत्साहिनी) of his great work. His love for her was something like that of Wordsworth for Dorothy. She died in 1894. To her he has dedicated his third part with an elegy, which for ever will remain one of the most soul-stirring and saddest of songs in the language. The second incident had its origin in the disquieted political atmosphere of the times when the book was sent to the press, as it was finished some time before it was published. Bubonic

¹ रत्ननगरीनु राज्यतन्त्र (1893).

plague had just been discovered then to have taken an epidemic form in the Presidency, and Government took certain preventive measures which ran counter to the habits of the people and infuriated them. Tilak was about this time reviving the traditions of the Maratha empire by asking people to celebrate the anniversary of Shivaji. The Collector of Poona and Lieutenant Rand were murdered while on their way back from a dinner-party, as the result of mistaken identity. All these untoward circumstances led Government not only to prosecute Tilak, but to inaugurate a policy of strict control over newspapers and printing presses. In the third volume Govardhanram had very fearlessly analysed the policy of the paramount power and criticised it. He had always a wealth of similes at his command, and in one of them he had compared the British Government to "the army of Sugriva" ¹. No press was prepared to print and publish a book containing such an obviously offensive, if not seditious, statement. Press after press was tried but none was found courageous enough to shoulder the responsibility. On the other hand, Govardhanram was firm in his belief that there was no offence or disloyalty in the statement and would not remove it. In the electrified atmosphere prevailing then somebody carried a rumour to his native place that Govardhanram was arrested by Government, just like Tilak. Prompt inquiries, however, showed that it was false. Owing to these difficulties, nearly three years elapsed before the book could see the light of day.

The fourth volume (1901), called "the Dreamland of Sarasvatī," ² completed his life-long labour. In it he said

¹ Students of the Ramayana need not be told that it consisted of monkeys.

² सरस्वती-मनोरम. The author translates it (in his preface) as "the Dreamland of the Minerva of our Indian Athercum."

everything he had to say, he was conscious of the fact that his work was a "Mosaic" ¹ and its variegated patterns were, if possible, made more so, on a background of sermons and similes culled from every available source, philosophy practical, religious and political, religion, as preached in the Puranic allegories, myths and legends, semi-historical epics like the Ramayana and the Mahabharat. Long chapters are devoted to the exposition of Indian metaphysics and of the "the almost scientific evolutionary allegory consistently running throughout the plot of the great and prolific Mahabharat" ² He has deliberately chosen to speak "in the language of myths, legends and traditions [and superstitions] familiar to his countrymen," ³ as he expected that it would enable the ordinary Indian mind to grasp and appreciate Western ideas and ideals to some extent ⁴

In the bewildering mass of details, which range over a wide field, from the tumble-down shed of a temple worshipper, to the artistically furnished drawing-rooms of plutocrats and princes, from the ideals of a modern educated youth to the practical business realities of old time Mehtas and Gumash-tas, from the ideals of a typical modern girl like Kumud Sundari to the lowest depths of social morality, as in the case of Khalak Nanda the author has never lost sight of his main object in writing this novel. He desired to present a picture "of the actual and the ideal aspect of our life in these days." ⁵

¹ Vide his English preface to Volume III

² ³ ⁴ English preface to Volume IV.

⁵ English preface to Volume III

He wished to descant on the problems of the day. In his rather involved and heavy language he himself puts it thus: "What these problems are, is a matter best left to the text itself. In the preface one can only attempt to introduce. Well, we are at present [in A. D. 1898] undergoing strange transitions in matters domestic, social, religious, political, and what not. What with the laden atmosphere of our domestic difficulties, what with the currents of our social ideals and forces, what with the many-tongued voices of the religions which a multiform and party-coloured nation is singing into our ears, what with the constant upheavals of new and jarring worlds of political entities and non-entities rising within one's view, whether he (sic., one) locates himself (sic., oneself) in one of the native states or in any place in British India, one standing in the midst of all this, is simply tempted to wish, like Cowper, 'for a lodge in some wilderness'.¹.....

"This universal jar and noise casts a gloomy shadow over many a wistful eye."² "In the several volumes of this tale, the landing places of our relief are sought to be pictured..... Progress and Harmony at home, in society, in religion, and with Government, both in and outside British India, peer overhead in the long run in spite of all this bewildering confusion; at least that is the postulate fundamental to our perspective. To look at these two cherubs of beauty and hope as they look at us is at least a vision of glory and happiness; and what is vision to-day may be reality to-morrow"....."Indian society and religions, orthodoxy and reform, visionaries and practical people, Indians and Englishmen, and even Government and states and subjects—all on Indian soil—must yield to this irresistible process of reciprocal assimilation, at least as an

1 2 English preface to Volume III.

inevitable duty in this working of the much talked of unity of all " 1

The Pisgah vision of Sarasvatichandra was the betterment of his country, his brethren and, through its ideal betterment of them, of himself 2 He saw the first two India steeped in ignorance, and hence unhappy. The effect of enlightenment, through education on Western lines, had partly removed the darkness, and resulted in a state of transition How to tide over this period, which is always one of unsettlement and disturbance, and to reach the further side with the least trouble, was the purpose of his labour at this work for well nigh fourteen years He knew that impact with the life and literature of the West had brought in its train its meretricious flash and bustle, as well as real light and liberty. But he was also aware that all that was found in the East was not such as to make us ashamed of. Our own institutions had also their good as well as evil side, and he stood for a reasonable blending of the good in both.

His characters have found an abiding place in Indian Literature, for his novel has been translated, like those of the well-known Bengali authors, Bankim Chandra Chatterji and Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore, into several vernaculars of India 3 His heroine, Kumud Sundari, a "frail and fair anemone," literally "bends and then fades silently" 4 She gets out of her unenviable position, that of a young widow-her hand given to Pramada Dhan at the marriage altar, but her heart all along

1 Ibid

2 As pithily put by him, देशहित, लोकहित, आत्महित.

3 Marathi Hindi, Bengali

4 Shelley's Prometheus Unbound.

wedded to Sarasvatichandra by a way, honourable to herself, her dead husband and to the society at large, which still holds, that the life of a Hindu widow of the higher caste should be passed in cherishing the memory of her dead husband and in doing acts of piety and charity and not in a remarried state. Her purity of life, her charitableness, her meekness, have furnished an ideal for Hindu girls and wives to follow for all time. Her mother Guna Sundari, though never educated in a school as

Kumud Sundari and other women her daughters Kumud and Kusum were, was a real helpmate to her husband Vidya Chatur, who had made her taste at home the fruits of education and fitted her as a companion for the high position in life he held. There are other female characters, such as Alak Kishori, the bouncing, tomboy like sister of Kumud Sundari's husband, who free of tongue and hasty in action would brook no restraint, Soubhagya Sundari, her mother, a mild mannered Hindu lady, a type of many found in Hindu families always remaining in a state of tutelage either of her husband, son or aggressive daughter, Khalak Nanda and Rupali and others of the free and easy type. Chandravali the saintly Sister Superior of the Female Math ¹ of Sundargiri, who though an anchoress knew enough of the world to guide Kumud Sundari aright. Male characters are drawn with the same firmness. Sarasvatichandra, the modern educated youth and

Sarasvati chandra son of a wealthy Bombay Shethna, who saw visions of accomplishing the improvement of his country, his brethren and sisters, whose boast was that he had transformed himself into "a student of the world" ² from being a mere student ³

¹ Convent

² अनुनयायी.

³ વિદ્યાર્થી

of learning and could observe without speaking could retain what his ears had heard and could watch the changing colours of the world without colouring himself.¹ He loved Kumud Sundari and she loved him but the ill will of his stepmother made him leave his home and having a touch of the *wander lust*, he began to roam over the country incognito. Late threw him and his beloved together in the same house he as a guest and she as the newly wedded wife of the eldest son of the family. After a long ordeal where they pass through many vicissitudes, they manage to preserve their purity and even when deliberately thrown together for five nights in a cave by their respective rescuers from the jaws of death he from the hands of highwaymen and she from the river, the Saints and Sisters of the Math on Sundargiri, they come out of the fire purer more chastened, diviner than when they entered it. Their conversation gives a perfect picture of whatever divinity there lies in the selfless, lustless love of a woman for a man. It is here that he discloses to her the ideals that he next to his heart and they both find themselves in perfect agreement as to how to accomplish them. She confesses that he alone would not without her at his side to supplement his work and to look after him and his wants be able to put those philanthropic ideals into practice, and is therefore prepared to risk the odium with which society and his own family would view a widowed young girl standing by the side of an unmarried young man. Sarasvatichandra wanted to utilise his vast wealth in the accomplishment of certain philanthropic schemes. With a view to regenerate Indian society, he wanted to found houses and scholarships, sanatoria and free studentships with the help of which poor scholars and students,

¹ “*हे बोल्या अगर जोई करु छु, काने सोमयेले मनमो राखी शकु छु, खाते रगया विता सक रग जोई शकु छु*” *Sarasvatichandra* Volume I. Chapter VII

commercial, technical and scientific, should carry on their work of study and research, travel to foreign countries for advance courses, untrammelled by the thought of providing money for the same. It was an ambitious scheme and would have been topheavy, unless the force to balance it came from the other member of the society, for this purpose the help of a woman, sympathetic, patient, accomplished and friendly, and fired by the same zeal as himself was a *sine qua non*. Sweet Kumud offered herself for the task, and thus ended their test in the lonely cave. Steadfast of purpose Sarasvatichandra, like all people with highly strung nerves, now and then falls into despondency. But, on the whole, one forgets his rashness due to inexperience and youth, his perfect indifference to the results his actions would have on others who loved him deeply like his friend Chandrakant and his father Lakshminandan, and comes to think of him only as that amiable product of the new age, a man who wanted to use his learning, his wealth, his all for the philanthropic purpose of the uplift of his own society. The canvas is crowded with many other minor male characters, and those of them which are connected with the intrigues and conspiracies of Native states are drawn lifelike, from models with which he had come in actual contact, and from first hand observation. But the figures that overshadow the whole work are Sarasvatichandra and Kumud Sundari, and of the two the latter predominates.

The novel, especially the first volume, took such a hold of the imagination of the people and circulated

For a long time
Sarasvatichandra
set the stan-
dard to others

among such a very large class of readers and writers in the province, that in whatever similar work that was published thereafter one found an imitation of Sarasvatichandra. The copying may have been unconscious, but the turn of the style,

the drawing of the characters the verses all reflected the peculiar characteristic of Govardhanram's work, no small homage to a living author. And even now, though the charm is broken, its popularity has not waned. The volumes are being called for with the same insistence as before and edition after edition, each volume getting costlier and costlier owing to the increasing cost of paper and printing materials is being published by the publishers, for instance the first volume has run into seven editions in thirty years with a total sale of nearly 25 000 copies, a unique achievement in the literature of our province. Even Government and the University have considered them fit to be text books for candidates for the Indian Civil Service and the highest examination in Arts.

One final observation before parting with the novel the work is so gigantic, so realistic¹ and minute in details, so scholarly, so laden with Sanskrit, both in quotations and in style, so interspersed with "wise saws" and practical pieces of advice, that it is not possible to make a resume of its contents. It stands by itself it has carved out a special niche in the temple of our literature and he who wants to appreciate it to the full must go to the fountainhead and drink there.

Govardhanram's attempt at pointing out the foibles of English-educated society found an imitator in Motilal, Tribhondas Sattawala, who in 'The Twentieth Century of the Vikram Era'² gives his readers many peeps into the life of a typical Bombay youth, with more wealth than education. His wardrobe and the number of his boots and shoes would do credit

¹ At times such as one would not like to read before the members of one's family

² विक्रमनी बीसवीं सदी (1901)

to a West-end dress-maker's shop, and the dilemma he was in every morning as to which pair of shoes he should select for the day is really amusing. The debauched life of Bombay youths, the costly litigation on the Original Side of the High Court, the unscrupulous ways of the attorneys, and numerous other touches of realism and humour evoked a good deal of genuine interest in the story when it first came out. The writer belonged to Bombay and knew a good many things about the various sides of its life.

Another realistic novel

Attempts, with varying degrees of success, have been made, to depict the conflict in the domestic life of the College educated or England-returned youth, due to his being mated to an uneducated wife and to having to live jointly with a family the members of which would in education, ideals, aspirations be, according to him, far behind him. One such writer was the late Bhogindra Ratanlal Divatia, B.A. He has written about a dozen stories, but only two of them have pretensions to merit. One of them¹ is modelled on Tolstoy's ideals, and deals with the labour problems of the West, as if they had assumed the same acuteness and importance in India as in Europe. The life of the average factory labourer in Bombay furnished him with a tolerably good background for his pictures. The other one, "An Assistant Collector," (an adaptation of an English novel) depicts the life of a Gujarati I.C.S., dragged down from the high pedestal of his important office by the stupidity of the members of his household. Unhappy in the possession of an uneducated wife and a superstitious, old, orthodox mother, he feels at every step of his career the disadvantage of his position when compared to that of his English confreres. The book fully serves its purpose, for it is simply written, and

Bhogindra

¹ *સાક્ષાત* (1905).

can be understood by even those who are not very highly educated

Bhogmdra belonged to a band of workers who have constituted themselves into a society or Brotherhood¹ for the encouragement of healthy, cheap and interesting literature specially intended for women and children. Under the impetus of that object, they have maintained a monthly periodical for the last seventeen years² and supplemented its efforts for the instruction and education of its fair readers by writing simple stories³. They set out, sometimes in amusing, sometimes in serious tones the objectionable ingredients of our social customs and usages, such as street caste-dinners, of our social and domestic manners and habits, such as the notorious hunger of Brahmuns and the satisfying of that hunger at the expense of their credulous hosts, the ignorance and stupidity of village schoolmasters, the cupidity of low paid village officers like Vahivatdars, and similar other features of our public life also find place in them. The impression left after reading these stories is momentary, not lasting like that received from the perusal of the works of greater men, but as it is, they attract both men and women, by their simplicity of language, the familiarity of the pictures presented, and above all by the sincerity and earnestness of the writers. The disinterested work of this Samaj should be appreciated and encouraged more than is done at present |

¹ बहुसमान.

² सुदरी सुबोध

³ अलक्ष ज्योति (1907) मधुकरः पद्मनाभ (1908), योगिनी अयया नरस्वतीनो जीवनमुवास बालाः ज्योतिषज्ञ (1909) प्रियव्रता are a few of them

As for their magazine also they have thrown open its columns to both short and long stories. They mostly bear a family likeness to one another, the subject matter being a boy, absent at College, hence separated from his newly wedded wife, generally suffering from the taunts of her outrageous mother-in-law, wishy-washy love correspondence, the termination of his College career, settlement in life as a clerk, or a Vakil or a Doctor, the rearing of a family and a happy end. The performances are limp, they lack masculinity, are fit for children, and after a few stories have been read, they pall because of their monotonousness.

The first fruits of English education were a distinct dislike for our social customs, which to such students appeared to be bonds. Girdharlal Dayaldas Kothari, one of the earliest of Gujarati graduates wrote his first book, "The New Generation,"¹ to demonstrate this dislike. Ichharam Suryaram's Ganga (1889) also paints a picture of Gujarat's social life as viewed by an inhabitant of Surat. However, as time passed it was found that the results of that education were not all desirable. The strain it involved, the disintegration of the joint family life that it resulted in, and a number of other undesirable results were observed which tended to undermine the simplicity and whatever modicum of happiness we possessed under our old domestic regime. "Why did you ruin me by making me a Master of Arts?"² is a story written

¹ नवी प्रजा.

² एन. ए. बनाके क्या मेरी मिरी सराब की ? (1906) by Amrat Keshav Naik.

with a view to exhibit this picture though incidentally one finds many other patriotic touches in it. It is specially deserving of notice because it is written by one not educated in a school or a College a stage actor by caste and profession and consequently not expected to wield a powerful pen.

Mukula Mardan by Krishnarao Bholanath Divatia the Wagh Nakh of Shivaji Ranvira Sinh Sur Sagar ni Sundari¹ the fight at Haldighat by Sheth Purshotam Visram Mowji

an extremely modest and unassuming wealthy Minor writers Shethia of Bombay and a favourite both of Lakshmi and Sarasvati Vipin and Mogal Sandhya by Rajendra Somanarayan Dalal B.A. a share and stock broker by profession and a student and writer by inclination पाँच प्रेमकथा (Five Love Stories) by Chandrashankar N. Pandya B.A. LL.B. are some of the original works written during the last ten or fifteen years i.e. after we came completely under the influence of English education. They all furnish entertaining and healthy reading.

Where so much is being written trashy literature also is bound to come into being and also to flourish. Trash It would in no way conduce to the knowledge of the reader nor is it to his interest to become acquainted with such works. But we may give the name of one by way of illustration. The seven or eight volumes of Vilam and Manek by G. K. Delvadakar would be hard to beat for their trashiness their unreality their unhealthiness and yet such is the taste of the uneducated masses that the writer claims that his book has become very popular.

1 An adaptation of Scott's Lady of the Lake to old Rajput traditions

A very large part more than one half of the literature of fiction consists of translations in a majority of cases it is easier to translate than to write an original work. Translations from Sanskrit, Bengali, Hindi and Marathi, even from Urdu, and by far the greatest number from English bear out the above observation. The translators naturally fall into two categories, Hindus and Parsis. There are a very few Mahomedans, and their number is negligible.

Bina's *Kadambari* in Sanskrit is a book of world wide reputation and is one of the most difficult books to translate. The honour of doing so successfully into Gujarati rests with Chhaganlal Harilal Pandya B.A. It is the result of unusual care, intelligence, and aptitude for the selection of right words to convey the sense of the inimitable numerous and lengthy metaphors of the original Sanskrit text. Perhaps one can say that if the author had chosen to write in Gujarati instead of in Sanskrit, he would have done it just as well as the translator has done. "*Kusumavali*" (1889) by Dolatram Kirpam Pandya though an original work seems to have copied this translation and that too feebly.

Our social customs, specially early marriages and those also not the result of courtship or love making or mutual selection as in Europe, do not lend themselves to the generating of that pre-nubial feeling or emotion which Europeans call love. So that one very powerful factor in the creation of the literature of fiction is wanting with us. Similarly, in other respects, our domestic and social life is so monotonous, we all so commonly move in the same rut for

Majority of novels translations

Kadambari

Difference in social customs, drawback to translations of English novels

generations that variety which is another effective feature of that literature is also denied to us. So that so far as novels written in English are concerned it is difficult to adapt their subject matter to our social life, all such attempts have failed because of the absence of the similarity of circumstances. Parsis have made efforts in that direction but even they with their lives becoming more and more anglicised every day have not wholly succeeded. So that translations remain mere translations: we fail to enter into the spirit of the original, we feel like strangers before its descriptions of love scenes. To us much of what is

<p>Not so from Indian verna culars</p>	<p>best in it appears to be artificial and unnatural Translations from Bengali and other vernaculars on the other hand are more appreciated, because</p>
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more easily and naturally followed. Bengal is as great a sinner as Gujarat in the matter of early marriages the prohibition of widow remarriage and the hardness of her social life, so that at one time there was quite a rage with Gujarati youths to study Bengali and reproduce works from it into Gujarati. Bankim Chandra Chatterji, Romesh Chandra Dutt, Vasant Kumar Mukharji and many other Bengali novelists have been made familiar to Gujarati readers and it is a regular feature of some of the Gujarati monthlies to publish, almost in every issue,

<p>Bengali</p>	<p>some story or other from the pen of Dr Rabindra Nath or some other well known Bengali writer, in the form of translations. Narayan Hem chandra led the van and his translations, uncouth and ungram matical as they were, were still appreciated firstly, because the originals themselves were works of art and beauty and secondly, because the emotions the incidents, the facts all bore the ring of familiarity, and had in them much that was common both to</p>
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Gujarati and to Bengali. Hardly has a good book in Bengali remained untranslated into Gujarati.¹

A great many of the novels depicting scenes and narrating incidents from the history of Maharashtra given away as presents to their subscribers by the Gujarati of Bombay and the two other weeklies of Ahmedabad are founded on Marathi works and are more or less translations. Marathi itself has not yet advanced far in this branch of literature. It is far inferior to Bengali and even to Gujarati and is only now beginning to make headway.

There is however one very remarkable novel written in Marathi by Mr. Hari Narayan Apte one of the best of Maharashtra's literary men. It is called *The Dawn* (उप-જાત) and describes the state of the country and of Marathi society about the time Shivaji took the fort of Torna and entered upon his successful career of freeing the Deccan from the Mahomedan rule. It is a substantial work divided into two parts and is well translated (1910) by a talented lady Mrs. Prasanna-ganvi Mehta into faultless Gujarati preserving all the charm and simplicity of the original Marathi over which she appears to have a wonderful command.

Ghanshiram Kotwal when Commissioner of Police at Poona in the old days was responsible for a number of adventures. This book of his adventures, too was translated into Gujarati in the early days and furnishes interesting reading on account of the quaint incidents and unusual circumstances it records.

¹ The names of the books thus translated and those of their translators are not given here. Those interested in the subject would find a few of them in *ગુજરાતી નવલ કથાનું ઇતિહાસ* by Manilal Varanbhai Tark (1911).

Hindi, though not so advanced as Bengali, is still ahead of Marathi, and there are several books which have been translated from Bengali into Hindi and thence into Gujarati. One such book is the late Haji Mahomed Allarakha Shrivji's *Seva Sadan*. He was very fond of Hindi himself, and always tried to get some of its best works placed before the readers of his monthly the *Twentieth Century*.¹

In Urdu a very fine book was written years ago to stimulate the interest of North India Mahomedans in the cause of the education of women. To contrast the ill and well managed households of two women, one uneducated and the other educated, the author created a very simple story and called it the *Mirat-ul-Urus* (the Mirror of Marriage). It has twice been translated into Gujarati; once very long ago by the late Behramji Fardunji Marzban, and once recently. Marzban has translated also another delightful book called the "*Tobih-Nasuh*" (the Repentance of Nasuh) from the same language.

As for translations from foreign languages, almost all of them are from English. *Travati* (1880) written originally in Dutch, translated by Chhagarnal Thakordas Moli, Scott's *Quentin Durward* (1881) by Karmadji Rahim Nanjiani, some of Le Galarnou's stories; Reynolds's novels and much of the action centering round the adventures of detectives have attracted translators. Mrs. Henry Wood's and Marie Corelli's stories have also been translated. Lord Lytton's *Zanoni* impressed Manilal Nathubhai Daryech by

1. *સર્વેશ્વર*, a fine story illustrated monthly till the year 1911 became extinct with the death in 1911.

2. Reynolds can hardly be put in the first rank. Many cultured persons have not heard his name even.

its mysticism and he adapted it to Indian circumstances under the name of Gulabsinh (1897) ¹

Prof W Bain's stories read in English as if they were translations from Sanskrit of books resembling *Kadambari*. It is not so of course the author has so saturated himself with the spirit of the Sanskrit writers and identified himself so completely with them in ideas and expression that one finds it difficult to believe that the stories were originally written by an Englishman. Just as Lafcadio Hearn discovered and became one with the spirit of Japan so amongst Englishmen Prof Bain has been able to enter into the inside of Sanskrit story literature and bring out its innate beauty and delicacy into English. His *Heifer of the Dawn* is translated by the late Mrs Urmila Dayaram a creditable work ² and his *The Ashes of a God* and *A Draught of the Blue* ³ by Amratlal Saherlal Dave and *A Digit of the Moon* by the late Valmiki Kanta Varsinhris Divatia ⁴. He has also translated *Nur Jahan* a novel in English by Sirdar Jogendra Singh (1914)

By far the largest number both of the translators of English novels and of the readers of such translations are Parsis. Col Meadows Taylor's *Indian novels* most novels Sir Bartle Frere's *Pandurang*, Harri Mrs Henry Wood's social novel *Reynolds*, *Mysteries of London*, *Mysteries of the Court of London* and almost all his works have

¹ Translations of books like *Laila* and *Virginia the Fort of Otranto* and several others are now almost forgotten

² ઉપાનન્દિના (1914) She has also translated Mrs S. J. Hall's *Kamala* as *Kamala* (1915)

³ અનગમ્ય (1916) નિર્ગેની

⁴ દન્ડુ કલા (1911)

met with a warm reception at the hands of Parsi writers. At the head of them stand two brothers Kaikhusru Navroji Kabraji and Bomanji Navroji Kabraji. The novels of the former were meant to be adaptations of English to Parsi life. But they fell flat. It was really English life under a Parsi name. The language is what is now known as Parsi Gujarati. Kaikhusru's language however, made an attempt to lean towards pure or Hindu Gujarati but his brother Bomanji's is without that redeeming feature. Bomanji is a very prolific writer. Constant perusal of such novels has a tendency to create a demand for them as the reader yearns for such light sensational reading. Just as in English so here the demand creates the supply and translation after translation rapidly appears.

Besides these two brothers many more Parsis have tried their hand at translations one of them, Some Pars write s Pestonji Jamshedji Satha carries the palm so far as purity and gracefulness of language are concerned. His translation *Chand Bibi* (1894) of Col Medows Taylor's novel *A Noble Queen* is a model of correct Gujarati written by a Parsi equalled only by the style of such well known writers as the late Kharshedji Bomanji Framroze the late B M Malabari S M Desai Palanji Desai and G K Nariman. Equally interesting and well written are his other books.¹ Kharshedji Bomanji Framroze was a perfect master of Gujarati.

¹ अराडमी सदीनु हिंदुस्तान (1896) जनानखानानी बीबीजी (1913 2nd Edition) a translation of Reynolds *Loves of the Harem* शाहजादो अने मिंवारी (1914 2nd Edition) a translation of Mark Twain's, *The Prince and the Pauper* हाजी बाबासाहस कर्मी (1887) a translation of that well known English book *The Adventures of Hajji Baba*. Even independently of translations it may be incidentally mentioned that he maintains the same level of style in his original work e.g. in his

and Persian, and his Gujarati stories though mostly bearing on Parsi social life, are very interesting. Jehangir Behramji Marzban is a well known translator¹ as well as independent story-writer, though more known to fame and the public by his humorous writings.

Many thoughtful Parsis have all along been aware of and deplore the several cankers in their social and domestic life which eat into their vitality. They deplore the evil of having to pay a very large sum along with their daughter to the prospective bridegroom, often much beyond the means of the parents, they deplore the imitation of European modes of living and dressing to which many of their co-religionists have succumbed to the detriment of their health, means and happiness. They have utilised the weapons of invective and ridicule to attack these evils, they have chosen to embody them in the shape of novels, and many writers have entered this field with varying degrees of success. A community which at one time was proud of the entire absence of beggars and prostitutes in it because of its well regulated life and organisation has fallen from that high estate and the endeavours of writers of social novels²

Who deplore evils of their society
Parsi women writers

સમસ્તાર મયુષ યાને ત્રિષાલ્લશી આયના which is a work on auguries for the explanation of dreams, the effect of the planets on human life and such out of the way subjects

1 He has translated some of Col Meadows Taylor's novels such as Tara (1886) and Sita. His style in these earlier works was purer and more full of grace than in his later ones.

2 Many of these novels have catchy and suggestive titles. કેશનના વિર્ગાચારી, રીતની ધીર, ચેતપદ્મ, શર. These writers are extraordinarily fond of alliteration and rhyme as witness the titles of a large

like Rustom Pestonji Masani, M A,¹ and S. M. Desai, amongst men, and Miss B. L. Palamkot, Miss Bai Ai Limji Palamkot, two gifted sisters, (the latter, a past mistress of invective and alliteration and rhyming prose), Mrs Jarbanu Kothavala and many others, who write under assumed names like Thelma etc, have done very little to check the advancing tide of the impoverishment of its middle classes and the moral lapses it brings in its train.

Amidst all this mass of literature, however we have come across very few works which are of more than ephemeral interest. There is nothing here which can be compared to Karan Ghelo, much less to Sarasvatichandra.

Fictional literature has two sides, serious and humorous. Parsis best If Parsis have been lacking in making any appreciable contribution to its serious side; writers of humour beyond a quantitative predominance, they carry the palm on its humorous side. The genius of the community lends itself very aptly to the creation and perpetuation of humour. Parsis are fond of good cheer and are always jovial, at times boisterous, to the disgust of their sober-minded, serious Hindu friends or companions. Their bonhomie is crystallised in Jehangir Behramji Marzban's "A repository of

number of their works गुली गरीब; भीखो भरभरीओ; शिरिनना संकट;
 धारजनु धन; देलजंग दलेर; दीनी डाही, गमगीन गुलां; पीरोजा केम परणी;
 वावलानी कहाणी; मेरी मडम; (alliteration) भोलोदोले, बापना थाप (rhyme)

¹ His social novel, *बोधलु* (1901) is one of the best works in this line. It is founded on Charles Read's *Simpleton*, but is so well adapted to Parsi social life, that unless one was told about it, one would think that it was an original work.

Marvels."¹ It is a collection of humorous stories and situations, witty sallies and repartees, which raises general laughter. It is very properly dedicated to those saturnine individuals who always look as if they had just swallowed a dose of castor oil. There is nothing gross or coarse about the stories; they are a repertoire of light badinage; their naturalness and simplicity afford fun even to children. Altogether it is one of the best collections of original humorous stories in the literature. Besides another such humorous book,² he has written other³ types of books also, though not specially devoted to fun; they are books of travel, but even they are permeated with his spirit of humour; his narrations are couched in a light, cheery style, and he never misses a single opportunity to raise a laugh or extract fun out of God's creatures, whenever he comes across suitable material. No other Parsi writer has

been able to approach him and it appears

Marzban best that even after the lapse of nearly a generation, his monopoly to raise side-splitting laughter amongst his readers has not been disturbed. The book called "The Fairyland of the Eccentrics"⁴ may be quoted as an example of an effort, feeble at the most—in this direction by others.

1 *કૌતુક સંગ્રહ*

2 *પંચ કથા* a series of five short stories caricaturing the artificialities of present-day Parsi life

3 *મુંબાર્શ્યા કાશ્મીર* (1887), *મોરિયાનેયાં મારસેન્સ*, *વોલાદર્તી રહેજા* (1912); *મોરું વિલાયત* (1913) The last three narrate his experiences in Europe during the three voyages he made to that Continent.

4 *વસ્તાને વજરમ.*

Not only as original writers of humorous books but as translators of works on humour, they have been very successful. Mrs Caudle's 'Curtain Lectures' have been translated into Gujarati, but entirely in the form of an adaptation,¹ and have not suffered one whit in the process. They read as funnily as in the original. One commiserates the Parsi husband in Gujarat as one does Mr Caudle in England. The adapter has managed wonderfully to preserve the spirit of the original.²

Works of repartees, sallies of wit, existed also in the older vernacular literatures of India, like those concerning Court wits like Birbal in the time of Akbar, or Laoova, the typical wit at the Court of any Emperor (Padshah), the narrator would like to mention. Collections of such stories have now and then enlivened the otherwise sober and serious literature of the province,³ but their number is not very large.

Years ago, it struck Manchharam Ghelabhai, the editor of the *Deshi Mitra* of Surat, that he could make some capital out of the eccentricities of a congenital fool. He therefore strung

1 દોમલી ચાંદની વાણ

2 An effort was made sometime back to adapt these Lectures to the life of a Hindu Gujarati in the pages of the 'Samalochak'. But it fell flat. It was not possible to transfer the genius and spirit of the original to the prosaic, unanimated life of a muffled Hindu.

3 For instance the following are such collections: રમૂજે દિલ પસદ; રમૂજે દિલ આરામ; હાજરજવાબી પ્રધાનની વાર્તા amongst the old and ચૈતુકમાઘ અને ચૌધવચન by Rao Sahib Ganeshji Jethabhai of Limbdā amongst the new. It is a faint imitation of Marzban's book and on merit third rate.

together instances of the stupidities of such a being, put them in a book-form, and called it "A Fool". As the inhabitants of Surat are by nature light, cheerful and not averse to joviality, the work was well read and appreciated. It has now sunk into oblivion, but we think that if it were revived there would be found in it much to interest readers in spite of its childishness and want of depth.

Amongst original Hindu writers, however, another son of Surat, Rao Bahadur Ramanbhai Malupatram Nilkanth towers above the rest. Ramanbhai Nilkanth, best humorous writer. Nature it seems, has endowed him with wit and humour and he is always bubbling over with them, even in his relations with his friends and companions. The humour of Dickens in the *Pickwick Papers* and of Mark Twain, at his best say in *The Innocents Abroad* peeps at us from every line of his writings, be it in his masterly work, the *Bhadram Bhadra* or in the short articles he now and then contributes to monthly periodicals. *Bhadram Bhadra* is the embodiment of an orthodox, hypocritical, Hindu fanatic of the older generation a strict upholder of caste prejudices. It is a powerful skit directed at the hypocrisy and unreasonableness of those who championed the cause of orthodoxy, in religion, in ceremonies, in food and drink, and who made a tool of the innocent bigot, *Bhadram Bhadra*. The humour of the situation is sustained from start to finish, and such was the sensation produced at the time it was written, that he was assailed on all sides with personal abuse, as some of his readers thought that the caps of the characters

૧ મુર્ખો. Curiously enough the writer followed up this book by another called મુર્ખસિંહ, the son of this Fool who as opposed to his father and perhaps to laws of heredity, in whatever he did betrays the characteristics of an ingenious and intelligent man.

described in it fitted them and they revenged themselves in various discreditable ways¹ Just as an attempt was made by Reynolds to imitate Dickens by taking Mr Pickwick over to France and to imitate Morier by taking Haji Baba to London and continuing their adventures there an attempt was made to follow up Bhadram Bhadra's adventures further in a contribution to a magazine and called उत्तरभद्र or the later Bhadram Bhadra² Ramanbhai's various contributions to the Press have now been collected in a book form³ to which he has contributed a very learned preface on Wit and Humour⁴

A very young writer Dhansukhlal K. Mehta has been writing a number of humorous stories both original and adaptations in the periodicals. Dhansukhlal next best He seems to be possessed of this particular sense of humour. It is not impossible if one were to judge from his present beginnings that he may run close to other established writers like Ramanbhai or Marzban when his hand is firmly set with age and experience⁴

¹ It provoked a reply called भ्रमणचंद्र, भद्रभद्रनो भेद अथवा आघट्यनो गोली च्छार (1902) which of course lacks all pretensions to humour and is a base attack on the character and names of some of the members of the author's family

² By Path ka (Narsinhrao B. D. Vata)

³ Called the हास्य मंदिर (1915) The Temple of Laughter His coadjutor in this line is his gifted wife Mrs Vidyagavri B.A. O.B.E. who till she chose to discover herself in the book as the author of several such contributions with her husband was hardly suspected of sharing the humorous side of life too

⁴ He has in a great measure fulfilled these expectations as witness his published books viz हु, सरला अने म्हार मित्रमंडळ (1921) विचारो अने भूलनो मोग, translations of two of Moliere's plays (1911)

Occasional
flashes We come across occasional flashes in periodicals from the pen of men like Krishnarao Bholanath Divatia or of Kathiawadi humour from that of Prahlad Chhaya, but the efforts lack continuity

Humour in
journalism,
poor English humorous books like Gulliver's Travels, the Adventures of Don Quixote and of Baron Munchausen and Dickens' Pickwick Papers are not found in our language. Weeklies like the " गप्पसप " (Gossip) and the Hindi Punch try to relieve the sombreness of our lives, but, with all that, the fact cannot be gainsaid that the literature is very poor in this respect. Perhaps our genius does not lie that way, we are more moody than jovial

CHAPTER VI

MISCELLANEOUS

BIOGRAPHY ESSAYS TRAVEL

The art of biography has been poorly cultivated by us: Gujarati boasts of no such biographies as **Biography** Morley's Gladstone, or Froude's Carlyle, or even small works like those in the English Men of Letters series. The reason is plain, namely the lack of material. With the greatest assiduity one succeeds in making indifferent attempts, which are more or less a recital of the outstanding features of the life and work of the subject of the biography, such, for instance, are the lives of Sheth Bhagwandas Harivallabh, of Rao Bahadur Mohanlal Ranchhoddas of Rao Saheb Mahapatram Rupram, Gokulji Zala, Karsandas Mulji and Durgaram Mehtaji, amongst contemporaries, and of Akbar, Siddharaj Jayasinh, Pratap, amongst historical personages, to mention only a few. The life of Bholanath Sarabhai by his son is a more substantial performance. However, as education progressed, and as the lines on which biographies should be written were studied more and more, it became possible to bring them out on more ambitious and spacious lines. The life of Rao Bahadur Nandshankar Tuljashankar, written by his son Vinayak Nandshankar Mehta, B.A., I.C.S., and of Govardhanram Madhavram Tripathi by his sister's son, Kantilal Chhaganlal Pandya, B.A., are serious endeavours in this direction. They do not merely catalogue the performances of the subject of the biography, but they actually create for us the atmosphere in which they lived and worked.

and thus enable us to grasp and appreciate the greatness or otherwise of their work.

Parsis too have written the lives of their own great men
 Parsi Biographies Dadabhai Naoroji Ardeshir Kotwal Sir
 Jamshedji Jijibhai Sir Dinsha Petit Dr K N
 Bahadurji, M K Marzban, Beramji F.
 Marzban Mahabari and others

There have also been translations of the lives of great men
 Lives both Indian and others both by Parsis and
 Hindus The Lives of Gokhale, Justice Ranade
 Raja Ram Mohan Roy Keshab Chandra Sen Ishwar Chandra
 Vidyasagar, Mahavir Swami, Shankaracharya Vallabhacharya
 out of the Indians and Zoroaster Mahomed Christ Tolstoy,
 Miss Florence Nightingale Queen Victoria Benjamin Franklin,
 George Washington Garibaldi are a few of those out of
 non Indians translated into Gujarati

Essays abound in Gujarati from the pen of both communities
 Essays They generally relate to the social and domestic
 evils of each of them and either satirize the
 unideal aspects of their life or sermonize on them Now
 and then the monotony is relieved by essays on literary and
 ethical subjects from persons like Rao Bahadur Ramanbhai
 Manilal Nabhubhai Govardhanram Tripathi Narsinhrao
 Bhobanath Prof Anandshankar Dhruva Prof Atsukhlalkar
 K Trivedi Keshavlal Harshadrai and Nandlal K Dilshit

The literature of travel owes a great deal to Parsi writers,
 as they are socially freer to cross the sea than
 Works on travel by Hindus their Hindu brethren They had been voyag-
 ing to China and Europe long before the Hindu
 did and their works therefore take priority over those of the

latter which were written in the beginning by about only three persons Karsandas Mulji's description of his voyage to England¹ embellished as it is with very good illustrations is considered one of the best books of travel much superior to Mahapatram's which came out later Shaikh Yusuf Ali's book on the other hand is inferior to Mahapatram's Damodar Ishwardas Librarywala ventured to travel to China and he too has written about his travels there .

Parsis could also travel more easily in India itself owing to freedom from restrictions about food and drink and therefore they take precedence in this respect also over Hindus who have written only a few books here and there more with the eye of a pilgrim than a traveller Parsis also know how to embellish their works with illustrations and thus secure added charm and instruction for their narrative² Recently two books on world tours have been written one by the Maharam Saheb of Gondal in Kathiawad and the other by a Mahomedan Shah Sodagar (Merchant prince) Haji Suleman Shah Mahomed Lodhia of South Africa

Works on religion mythology metaphysics the Vedanta and latterly on economics and science have been published by the score But they do not form a part of pure literature and hence do not find a place here nor has the rise of Gujarati journalism or periodicals got anything to do with it

1 इंग्लंडमा प्रवास (1860)

2 Travels in India by Ardeshir Framji Moos and Travels in Southern India by another Parsi writer

An endeavour has been made in the preceding pages to trace the rise of Gujarati literature, from the time that education on the lines imparted in the country of our rulers began to be imparted in Gujarat, and the early as well as the later effects of such instruction on the different departments of our literature.¹ It took long for that education to become rooted; had it not been imparted under the aegis of Government and therefore with all the authority and awe that a Government measure carried, it would have taken still longer to diffuse it and to give it a firm foundation. Once it became established in schools and later in Colleges, its ideals of liberty and freedom spread rapidly, and young enthusiasts began to confuse license with liberty and looseness of discipline with freedom. Our old social ideals, our domestic usages and

¹ Babu Shrish Kumar De, M.A. who has written a History of Bengali Literature in the Nineteenth Century, 1800-1825 (1910), thus sums up the effect of this period on Bengali literature in his preface: "In the first place the Nineteenth Century possesses a peculiar interest for us. It is the period of British influence on Indian thought and one which witnessed a new awakening and the growth and building up of Modern Bengal and Modern Bengali Literature. The importance of this period, in all its aspects, political, social, religious, as well as literary, cannot be exaggerated." And further in Chapter I, he continues "The Literature produced since the permanence of the British Rule in Bengal, which is often conveniently described as 'modern' literature, has a character of its own, at once brilliant, diverse and complex. To label it in a phrase is not only difficult but misleading Its central role is lost in the extreme diversity of forms and tendencies exhibited. It is full of vitality, versatility and diligence; critical and cultured, intensely personal and self reflected in spite of diversity of styles and motives, this epoch has a character which differentiates it from any other era of Bengali literature. Can we imagine Krishna Kantar Will being published in the age of Bijaypatri or Nil-darpana in that of Bharat-chandra? How different are the problems of life and character which

habits, our reverence and respect for aged men and women and things, received a rude shock and began to give way. We thought every Western idea and European ideal better than our own, we thought a lot of that civilization, and proportionately underrated our own. After a few years, however, things began to assume their true perspective and we began to think that all that was ours was not bad and all that was our rulers' admirable. We, our country, our religion, our philosophy, our customs, had their good points too. It was Western scholars like Max Muller that opened our eyes, and we recovered from the first disturbing effects of that shock. We began to discriminate, and we found that it was possible for us to assimilate the good points of the West with our own. We have been following that line for the last twenty five years or so. Looking to the rapidity with which everything is moving all over the world after the Great War, it is not possible to predict for our ideas in literature any certain line of development. We also are caught in the maelstrom of disturbance and democracy, none knows where we shall land. We have therefore rested content with presenting the different stages in our literature, which in their turn reflect the different stages in the line of our progress, political, social and economic. We have nothing to be ashamed of in our past record. May God, in the years to come, make its pages still better and brighter!

Have I nankan paints from those we see reflected in the pages of Rabindra Nath? What a new world is that of Michael Hem or Nobin beside that revealed to us by Bejay, Kshemanand or Ramprasad? What wholly different types, ideas and aims? If we substitute in place of the names of Bengali books and authors our own, we shall appreciate the observations

CORRIGENDUM

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Page 103. Line 1, *Read* Amrat Keshav *for* Keshav Amrat

Page 133 Line 7, *Read* Kharshedji Bomanji *for* Bomanji
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